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WORKING PAPER 38

The Role of the Media in International Conflict

A report on a two-day seminar
held in Ottawa
12 - 13 September 1991

by
Christopher Young

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PREFACE

Working Papers, the result of research work in progress or the summary of a conference, are often intended for later publication by the Institute or another publisher, and are regarded by the Institute to be of immediate value for distribution in limited numbers -- mostly to specialists in the field.

The opinions contained in the papers are those of the participants and do not necessarily represent the views of the Institute and its Board of Directors.

Christopher Young has been foreign correspondent for Southam News based in Moscow and London and writes a foreign affairs column in Ottawa. He won the National Newspaper Award in 1982 and 1988 for his foreign coverage, and has been the Editor of the *Ottawa Citizen* and General Manager of Southam News operations.

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FOREWORD

On 12 and 13 September 1991, the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security convened an international conference on the role of the media in war and conflict. This was one year after the world community, through the United Nations Security Council, passed a series of resolutions which demanded that Iraq withdraw its forces from occupied Kuwait. All these urgings and injunctions, beginning on the day of the invasion through the end of November were ignored, and by January, a coalition of countries was involved in a shooting war with Iraq on a scale not seen since the Korean conflict.

The conference -- with participants drawn from governments, the press and media, and academics from many countries -- consequently devoted much energy and discussion to events in the Persian Gulf. The Persian Gulf War became a case study for detailed analysis of how mass media, television, radio and the written press covered that war, interacted with the protagonists' governments and armies, changed the war's course and outcome, and influenced the publics of various countries about what they were seeing, hearing and reading.

While the Persian Gulf story took up a large part of the conference discourse, and gave it obvious timeliness and animation, the Institute conceived the event some months before Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. The aim of the conference was to examine critically the role mass media -- which, compared to war, is a relatively recent human innovation -- has played in human kind's most dangerous and lethal preoccupation. To this end, we invited representatives of the major players in any modern war -- soldiers, journalists (print and electronic), and government officials -- as well as prominent theorists in communications and media studies. The questions we put to the participants, using the Persian Gulf War and other conflicts as case studies, were these:

What did the Gulf War teach us about the power of the media in the 1990s? What is the nature of the relationship between journalists on the one hand and the armed forces, politicians and diplomats on the other? Has this relationship changed as warfare has evolved, and why? What are the rules about media coverage of war made by

governments at the battle front and what difference do the rules make to the public's perception of a war and its progress? What makes one war "news" (Persian Gulf 1991) and another not (Eritrea 1966 to 1991)? Can journalists be co-opted by becoming parties to a conflict? What role, if any, does the media play in the run-up to a war or to its resolution or escalation? And what influence do journalists have in incidents of international terrorism and hostage taking?

In planning to publish the outcome of this conference, we wanted more than a simple chronological summary of the event as it unfolded according to the agenda. To this end, the Institute engaged Christopher Young, one of Canada's pre-eminent international affairs journalists and editors to present his observations and reflections on what transpired during those two days. Mr. Young has been foreign correspondent for Southam News based in Moscow and London and writes a foreign affairs column in Ottawa. He won the National Newspaper Award in 1982 and 1988 for his foreign coverage, and has been the Editor of the *Ottawa Citizen* and General Manager of Southam News operations.

What follows is an illuminating essay by an eminent observer of international political and military affairs on the major themes of the conference as presented and discussed by a uniquely qualified group of military, government, academic and media professionals.

Nancy Gordon
Director of Public Programmes

December 1991

I INTRODUCTION: AN UNEXPECTED WAR INTERRUPTS A WIDER PEACE, CATCHING SOLDIERS AND JOURNALISTS BY SURPRISE

The world at large was still enthusiastically congratulating itself on the swift, unplanned and relatively bloodless end of the Cold War when, on 2 August 1990, the army of Iraq invaded its rich but tiny neighbour, Kuwait. The entire territory of the kingdom was quickly occupied by the forces controlled by Iraq's President Saddam Hussein, who had only recently concluded a costly nine-year war against Iran, which Iraq lost.

Although experts were aware of a difficult border dispute between the ill-matched neighbours, the attack was unexpected. It caught the whole world by surprise, as so often happens, in the European, Middle Eastern, North American holiday season, when the captains and the kings, as well as other folk, generally vacate their homes and offices for travel or relaxation elsewhere.

The newspapers and broadcast media of the Western world were caught as unprepared for the crisis as were the political leaders, diplomats and soldiers. For all of them, in their different spheres, the challenge was to deal with a crisis that posed a threat to the oil supplies of many countries, as well as to the new and unfamiliar power balance in a world where one of the two superpowers had in effect abdicated that status. What President George Bush grandly called The New World Order faced its first serious test.

The two-day seminar that is the subject of this report was not about the Persian Gulf War itself -- or the Second Gulf War, as the presiding officer, Bernard Wood, said it should be called, counting the war of the 1980s between Iraq and Iran as the first one. Rather, the seminar was arranged to consider the role of the media in international conflict in general, but with special reference to this short, decisive war that is still fresh in all our minds. Because the great majority of reporters assigned to this story from all over the world were cooped up, coddled, controlled and confined by direction of American military and political news managers, there are now guilty feelings and sometimes angry self-reproach among journalists who feel they somehow failed the public and themselves. There is much dispute about how the war was waged by the United States (in fact) and by the United Nations (in principle); there is little dispute that the role of the Western

media in covering the 1990 summer crisis, the autumn-winter stand-off in the desert, and the one-month war of January-February 1991, was both inadequate and inglorious.

The Ottawa seminar discussed why this was so more than whether it was so. But while speakers from the media might generally agree it was so, they differed on why, and on whether it was inevitable. There was some in-built confusion arising from the very different experience of Americans and Canadians in this war, and it was not always clear whether the pronoun "we," as used by various speakers, meant "we Canadians," "we Americans," "we Americans and Canadians," "we of the international press corps," or one of several other identifications that might have been intended. In some contexts, this blurriness mattered, because the American military, after all, ran the war and won it, allowing only tightly controlled access for reporters and cameras to the scenes of action. Although important politically, the Canadian military role was marginal almost to the point of irrelevance. Therefore the access of Canadian journalists to war zones was virtually zero, except where some enterprising individual might find it for him or herself.

Both Canadian and American speakers engaged in self-criticism with respect to the performance of reporters in the Gulf. Many blamed the admitted failures on the restrictions imposed by the military, implicitly with the connivance of the civilian political leadership. There was not much difference between Americans and Canadians on this score, since the Pentagon, with White House support or on White House orders, set the boundaries of permissible reportage. There was this major difference where pool coverage was concerned: the pool reporters were chosen from American and British applicants; Canadians (and others) were excluded no matter how long they waited or how much they complained. In providing news briefings, Canadian political and military leaders did not go beyond the American guidelines, and perhaps could not have done so given their restricted military role and their absence of direct knowledge. Prime Minister Mulroney's official statements on matters to do with the Gulf crisis came to be known in one Ottawa news bureau as "George Bush plus one hour." This was closer to truth than satire. Reporters telephoning the Prime Minister's Office for comment on a new White House statement, would often be told that there would be a statement in about an hour. This statement, when it came, would say the same thing, sometimes even using the same phrases.

What was clear as desert stars were the irreconcilable differences of view between military spokespersons, with their concern for security and the safety of their troops, and the news media whose job it is to seek the facts, see the action and tell the story. Reporters and news executives who addressed the seminar usually accepted the need for the security of military plans and the need to keep secrets for the purpose of saving soldiers' lives. But the point was also made that secrecy and controls on reporters are often imposed for reasons of political convenience, for example to avoid blame for military and political errors that deserve exposure.

On one point there was wide agreement: that this particular debate had been going on for centuries, and was unlikely to conclude any time soon. One practical reason for this is that there appears to be little public support for the journalistic side of the argument in the United States, in Canada, or in Britain, where the current American techniques of news management and control of reporters were pioneered in the Falkland Islands, in the far-off South Atlantic, in the summer of 1982. For editors and journalists in the field, that is a disturbing fact.

II WAR BEHIND THE LINES: JOURNALISTS VS. GENERALS

This ancient clash of interests has gone on almost forever. We can trace it back at least to classical times when wrathful rulers sometimes slew the messengers who brought bad news from the battlefield. At the Ottawa seminar, Major-General Winant Sidle (retired) recalled that in the American revolutionary war and then the war against Mexico, communications were too slow to pose much of a security problem, but when the telegraph arrived, trouble began.

> The solution was censorship. In the Civil War, both sides used censorship, and it was effective sometimes and not effective others. In fact in all our wars, up through the Korean War, censorship was the answer. And I should add it was quite successful really in World War II and the Korean War because the press didn't complain too much and they got to see everything that was going on -- almost everything anyway. Now, when Vietnam came along it was a new situation.

The current generation of American generals had its baptism of fire in Vietnam. The outlook of the men who shaped the information policies for the Gulf War is deeply marked by what they consider was unfair news coverage by American reporters in Vietnam. General Sidle is a generation older than Generals Colin Powell and Norman Schwarzkopf, but they all share the Vietnam background. General Sidle's experience in defence information goes back to 1949. It is relevant to the present topic because of the jobs he held during that protracted and traumatizing war, which the United States eventually lost. An important element in the defeat was a loss of confidence and of belief in the war by the American people. The military and others, apparently including President Bush, blame journalists for creating the climate in which that loss of faith, and hence the loss of the war, happened. The president repeatedly said that his troops would not have to fight Saddam Hussein "with one hand tied behind their backs."

General Sidle was in the centre of that clash between the army and the press corps, which has heavily influenced the way in which subsequent American military operations have been run from the public information point of view. A Second World War veteran, he was Defence Department spokesman in 1966-67, then chief of information in Vietnam in 1967-69, the period when the tide of public opinion was

turning against the war. After commanding the US Artillery in Vietnam's II Corps in 1969, he became the army's chief of information from 1969 to 1973; deputy commanding general, US Fifth Army, 1973 to 1974; and deputy assistant secretary of Defence Public affairs, 1974 to 1975. Although he retired in 1975, he has continued as a consultant in this field right up to and including operations Desert Shield (the pre-war build-up) and Desert Storm (the aerial blitzkrieg against Iraq that followed).

"What I am going to give you now is the US military point of view," General Sidle said frankly, adding that some of it was official and some his own. "There is a genuine, serious, basic conflict between the media and the military when it comes to fighting a war." He quoted from an article written after the invasion of Grenada in 1983:

> Our military is trained to win. Winning requires secrecy. Our media are trained to report. Reporting must avoid secrecy. Now there's a conflict right off the bat.... The military's position today is that, yes, we want the press to cover our military operations, but what it prints and airs must not impair the security of operations or endanger our troops.

In Vietnam, the army did not want to use formal censorship, because that would have meant involving the government of South Vietnam, which both government and media wanted to avoid. So the Defence Department invented what were called "ground rules." There were fifteen rules covering sensitive areas such as location and movements of troops and plans for upcoming attacks. A reporter arriving in Vietnam had to get an accreditation card to travel in the war zone. To get the card, the reporter had to sign a statement agreeing to obey the ground rules and recognizing that the army could confiscate the accreditation if he broke the rules. "And since they couldn't get around in Vietnam without our help, it was pretty good leverage we had." Only nine cards were lifted during all the years of the Vietnam War, General Sidle said. "But unfortunately some of them were serious. The worst one was where we had to cancel an operation because one of our major newspapers carried advance notice of it." (The paper, he let slip later, was *The New York Times*.)

The British experience of the Falklands War in 1982 was mentioned only in passing, but American officials were aware that British military authorities had been able

to keep tight control of their intensely competitive media, assisted by the remoteness of the war theatre and the relative ease of controlling reporters on warships.

When the Reagan administration decided to invade the small Caribbean island of Grenada in 1983, control was even easier. The press was kept out entirely until the third day, when a pool of thirteen reporters was allowed to land. "That was great for no security violations, but the press didn't think much of it, and there was a huge furore in the United States," General Sidle remembered. He was asked to head a panel of newspeople and military officers to advise on how to deal with the press in the next war. One of the major recommendations was the use of pools, a system which was employed so rigidly during Desert Storm that it has become the main target of retrospective criticism on how that operation was covered. In the invasion of Panama, the system was judged a total failure because the pool was sent too late, saw no action, "and because the place was full of reporters anyway."

In journalistic jargon, the "pool" is a term for a small group of reporters and cameramen chosen to attend a given event where there is not enough space for the entire press corps. Pools are widely used at events such as summits and other conferences attended by national leaders whose presence attracts a massive media presence. By agreement, those chosen to be in the pool are obliged to write a short, factual account of what they see and to post it in a press centre where non-pool members can read it and use the material. Normally, everyone who wants to be present personally at one of the events will get a chance to do so on a rotation basis. If that is not possible, preference is given to major international news agencies and television networks, and consideration is given to fair representation of applicants from each interested country, and from print, radio and television.

The Canadian military had no direct experience of war in the television age to draw on when the government decided to send a small contingent of ships and aircraft to the crisis area. Canadian soldiers had served in United Nations peacekeeping operations in many parts of the world since the Second World War, but the only one that had required fighting troops was the Korean War, technically a UN "police action," forty years before Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Rear-Admiral Larry Murray, chief military

spokesman and briefing officer during the crisis, told the seminar that the Department of National Defence in Ottawa based its planning mainly on lessons learned during the confrontation with Mohawk Indians at Oka during the summer of 1990. Editors considered this a particularly ill-chosen model, given the attempts of the army to interfere with the transmission of news. By comparison with American numbers, Canada's press contingent was relatively small, although Rear-Admiral Murray remarked on the high reporter/pilot ratio at the Canadian air bases in the Gulf States, reaching as many as thirty reporters to thirty-six pilots. Some of the pilots at times felt they were over-covered.

However, the Canadian contribution to the allied forces was so small that Canadian reporters were completely excluded from all the press pools organized by the Americans. Thus, while American and British correspondents chafed under the restrictions of the pool system, the Canadians never even got that far. They had to be content with military briefings in Dhahran, in north-east Saudi Arabia, which were instantly telecast all over the world, and with press conferences and briefings in Washington, Ottawa and at bases in the Gulf States. Colin MacKenzie, Washington correspondent for *The Globe and Mail*, said he thought Washington was the best place to cover the war. Briefings were excellent and provided reporters with a good story every day. "The briefings were not filled with lies, but with errors of omission," he said.

On behalf of concerned Canadian news organizations, William Thorsell, editor of *The Globe and Mail* wrote to the government seeking assistance in getting Canadian reporters into the war zone press pools. No answer was ever received, said James Travers, editor and general manager of Southam News. Although five Southam writers were in the Middle East during the crisis, none was ever chosen for a pool. "You might have done better if you'd sent a brigade," said General Sidle.

When the build-up against Iraq got underway, it became obvious that a very large number of reporters was also massing around the fringes of the potential war zone. As the number of troops increased, so did the media numbers, until by December 1990 about 800 reporters and support people (mainly television crews) had gathered in Saudi Arabia to cover the impending war. When the war ended in February, 1,600 were there, and several hundred more were in the process of gaining entry.

Aileen McCabe of Southam News described the scene in Jordan, where another 900 or so had gone in the vain hope of obtaining visas to enter Iraq. "Sheer numbers in Amman broke down the system," she said. "I think the pool system would have broken down if the ground war had gone on much longer."

General Sidle, who provided most of these figures, remarked: "That's a lot of reporters -- 3,000 or more. It's hard for any organization to handle -- even the Superbowl has trouble with that many. We know the press wants to cover the battle on their own, but we can't let 3,000 people run around the battlefield, unescorted or anything else." His conclusions were:

- Operational security and troop safety must take precedence over any other factors;
- The media will have to limit numbers; if they do not, the Defence Department will have to do it;
- Field press censorship should be restored -- "the only solution that has worked to provide the greatest freedom of action for reporters, which is a key point, as well as furnishing maximum security and troop safety."

III IN SEARCH OF TRUTH: AN ELUSIVE SEAGULL AND A FEEBLE QUEST FOR PEACE

When pack journalism produces a cast of thousands chasing the same scraps of meat, when the pools are overflowing and the briefings only half true, it is time for a good reporter to strike out on another path. Geneviève Rossier, of Radio-Canada, complained that she had wasted a whole day looking for the famous oil spill, said to be ten times, or twelve times, or eighteen times the size of the Alaska oil spill caused by the tanker Exxon Valdez. With the one-month war in its later stages, she boarded a Saudi aircraft and spent a large part of a day hunting for a slick of oil spreading from a refinery near the Kuwait sea front. She and the pilot could not find it. She counted it a lost day, but in fact it was another useful reminder that in wartime at least, official spokesmen are not to be taken at their word, simply because it is part of their job to confuse and mislead the enemy. In that process, friends too are misled. Ms. Rossier did not say there was no oil slick; undoubtedly there was, since others took pictures of it. What she said as a member of the first panel on day one of the seminar was that no evidence was available that the slick was eighteen times the size of the Alaska oil spill, as stated officially. Nor could she obtain reliable information as to who or what had loosed oil on the waters of the Gulf.

Rajhida Dergham, New York correspondent for the London-based Arab newspaper *Al-Hayat*, answered a question about whatever happened to the famous oil-soaked seagull, which surely every TV watcher of the war carries engraved somewhere in the memory-track. "It was not even a local bird -- it was an imported bird," she said. The seagull was often used to illustrate the oil slick story on television, but some reporters believed it was not authentic. Geneviève Rossier later said that she and the reporters and camera crew she travelled with had not seen dead birds on beaches.

Ms. Dergham also criticized the failure to obtain Iraqi casualty figures. Both she and Ann Nelson, director of the (US) Committee to Protect Journalists, quoted the Harvard Medical School estimate of 170,000 dead, with people still dying from wounds. General Sidle said, "You've got to keep after the story, and I can tell you as a victim: Do it, because they

should. What about the oil slick? I'd like to know about that myself." Ms. Dergham said the question of casualties was not just a follow-up story, but a major tragedy.

Ms. Rossier said that the military briefings she attended in Saudi Arabia were not false, but perhaps half true, and did contain what turned out to be outright falsehoods. As examples, she cited the statement early in the war that Iraq's nuclear capability had been destroyed; and another statement that twenty-seven Americans had been killed by an Iraqi Scud missile even before the war began. As this is written in October, Iraq's nuclear development is still a cause of international anxiety.

A reporter who pursued his own quest for truth before, during and after the war, was Milton Viorst, Middle East correspondent of the *New Yorker*. His major concern, as he outlined in a luncheon speech, was whether the US government had genuinely sought to avoid a war with Iraq, or whether its apparent peace efforts were camouflage for a determination to teach Saddam Hussein a lesson and establish the United States as the unchallengeable major power in the Gulf. His presentation suggested the latter, but some other seminar participants expressed the opposite view.

Mr. Viorst said that he had spent a full year covering the crisis area. "Did the media coverage of the war make a difference?" he asked rhetorically. "My answer is that you bet it did." His research had only recently led to the information that General Schwarzkopf, as a member of the US Army's Central Command, had been to Kuwait several times in the months leading up to the war. He had been influential, in the aftermath of the Cold War's end, in redirecting US concern about danger in the area from the Soviet Union and Iran to the threat from Iraq.

> This is the principal issue as I saw it, that it was one more item of evidence that the United States had a great deal of influence on the attitude of Kuwait in the months prior to the invasion. And perhaps this was a very unhealthy attitude in terms of a tense set of negotiations with Iraq.... The president in his role as chief propagandist for the United States told us what he wanted us to know, but the problem was that the press did not challenge what he was saying. I read *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* every day, and see something of television. In the American press, I saw no evidence of anything very different from President Bush's agenda.... Congress didn't obtain, and the American people didn't obtain the information needed

to challenge the president on the subject of a war which I believe could have been avoided.

Mr. Viorst had found no evidence that Saddam originally intended to destroy Kuwait's sovereignty. There was a minor border dispute over lines drawn by a British diplomat in the 1920s and never accepted by Iraq, and this dispute turned out to affect the ownership of oil-bearing territory. Another dispute involved uninhabited island sandpits in the Gulf that were valueless to Kuwait but useful as protection for a port in Iraq. The Kuwaitis refused to give up the islands. There was a dispute over debts to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait incurred by Iraq during its war with Iran, which the Kuwaitis refused to forgive. And Iraq accused Kuwait of "slant drilling" for oil, sucking it out from under Iraqi territory. Saddam repeatedly warned Kuwait that it was endangering itself, but the Kuwaiti leaders ignored the warnings without preparing for an attack. No doubt they were influenced by General Schwarzkopf, who presumably assured them of American support, Mr. Viorst said. He confessed he had found no evidence of conspiracy by the United States and Kuwait, but the general Arab view was that the Kuwaitis had become very greedy, and that they took strength from promises of US support.

Saddam blundered by occupying all of Kuwait, in Mr. Viorst's analysis. If he had taken only the disputed area, the United States would have handled the question entirely differently. Even after the invasion, Saddam seemed confused about what he was going to do. President Bush also seemed uncertain, but after a meeting with Margaret Thatcher, he adopted a very hard line. The president discouraged, or vetoed, negotiations proposed by Arab nations. He chose a strategy of diplomacy by ultimatum and prepared for war, instead of treating the crisis as President Kennedy handled the Cuban missile crisis, allowing the adversary to save face. President Bush made clear that it was important to him to humiliate Saddam, drive him out of office, destroy his war-making potential and establish the United States as the uncontested power in the Gulf, replacing Britain, completing a process underway since 1971.

For the United States and its allies, Mr. Viorst said, it was an easy war. The only ones who suffered much were the Iraqis and the Kuwaitis. The American press and public went with a winner. Few challenged the president's view of a war that could have been

avoided. Maybe the press was suffering a crisis of confidence -- thinking that perhaps they had played too great a role in Vietnam. "I believe we really did a lousy job in bringing this information to the people of the United States in order for them to make a valid, well-informed decision about the war. I think we ought to be ashamed of ourselves!"

General Sidle popped up to say that General Schwarzkopf's position in the command system had given him responsibility for the Gulf area, and therefore there was nothing unusual in his pre-war visits to Kuwait.

On the final afternoon of the seminar, Jeremy Kinsman, assistant deputy minister for political and international security affairs at the Department of External Affairs, gave another version of how the war began. He had not been present during the earlier sessions of the seminar, arriving from a visit to Moscow just in time to deliver his own view. Despite that, his comments sounded to the seminar audience like a rebuttal of the Viorst speech the previous day.

Bernard Wood described a "groundswell of opinion" among participants that the Americans had not really tried to avoid the war, asking for Mr. Kinsman's comments, which were emphatic. There was no question in his mind at any time, he said, that the United States preferred a peaceful settlement to war. He described the Iraq affair as "a crisis of failed communications," in which television played a major part. It was not true, he said, that the Americans had decided in September or October to go to war. Despite the role played by CNN (see Chapter IV), there was very little communication of information. Every government had a self-serving relationship to television.

The key event, he argued, was the Helsinki summit meeting between Presidents Bush and Gorbachev in September. Mr. Kinsman said that Canadian officials were worried about the Americans demonizing Saddam Hussein, but, "We were wrong. Demonizing him was understating it. Imagine the impact for Saddam Hussein watching Bush and Gorbachev in Helsinki, talking entirely about him." Saddam completely misunderstood the impact of his own television performances, and he thought the United States was a paper tiger. For President Bush, once the extraordinary forces of the coalition had been assembled, the preference for peace persisted, but not, "with any

increasing disposition to shave the terms of the initial statement -- that the wrong had to be completely and totally undone before any negotiations took place."

The sanctions worked, "more or less," but they would not have been effective in time to keep the coalition from falling apart, Mr. Kinsmen argued. There was a lot of talk in Canada about this being an American war. The government view was that it was a United Nations war, in which Canada played a part.

In response to another question about why sanctions were not allowed to work for longer, Mr. Kinsman offered another set of answers: Saudi Arabia was "threatened" by the presence of women in the armies stationed on its soil, contrary to the mores of that society; the Americans had to take the lead because they had 500,000 men in the theatre; and, since the Chinese had not voted for Resolution 678 authorizing the use of force, the coalition could not delegate sovereignty to the UN Security Council.

For whatever combination of these arguments and motives, with Peter Arnett reporting the first air attack live from his office in Baghdad, President Bush let slip the dogs of war.

IV THE CNN WAR: HOW "CABLE LIVE" CHANGED DIPLOMACY AND PERHAPS WAR ITSELF

In the last few days of the one-month war, a Canadian diplomat was travelling in the Gulf States. Keeping an appointment with a senior minister in the crisis region, the Canadian sat in front of the large desk, while a television set behind the minister's head flickered and muttered with CNN's coverage of the war. The scene switched for breaking news: President Bush had rejected a Soviet peace proposal. Absorbed by this new development, the Canadian lost any ability to follow the comments of the minister, who, with the TV set behind him, was not listening.

Millions of people throughout the world must have been watching television when American aircraft swooped down on Baghdad in the first all-out air attack. It was hardly a great surprise. President Bush had repeatedly threatened it, issuing one ultimatum after another urging Saddam Hussein to start pulling back his troops and tanks. The press had analyzed the likelihood of various dates, readers knew when the moon would be full. In many homes in North America, Europe and the Middle East, TV sets were tuned to CNN -- Cable News Network, based in Atlanta, Georgia and girdling the world with news bureaux dedicated to the art of live coverage. Diplomatic offices all over the world tuned in CNN as long as the incumbent minister or official was at work, which tended to be much of the night as well as all day. No doubt the same was true in the offices and living quarters of presidents and kings, emirs and sheiks, who were also from time to time actors in the unfolding drama, and therefore performers for CNN.

"If we were to take a strong story line, compress it into a formal documentary, pre-empt the news hours, and run it for, say, two hours on any night, chances are quite high that very few people would watch," said Ed Turner, executive vice-president of CNN, responsible for national and international news (and no relation of the owner and presiding genius behind the CNN idea, Ted Turner). "But if you take the same information, the news and opinion, and build it around a live-from-the-scene reporter or anchor, and inject proper but frequent live shots from other aspects of the story, I believe you can not only attract a sizeable audience but also perform some important and effective services for the viewers."

The audience for the Iraq crisis of 1990/91 was huge and multinational, creating Marshall McLuhan's Global Village in an almost literal sense. Mr. Turner's after-dinner speech, much of which of which sounded like an extended CNN commercial for itself, is published as an appendix to this report. It contains a memorable dictum: "Governments will use and manipulate if they can. The manipulatee must determine whether what is being offered is newsworthy." The offerings are often propaganda, but that too can be news in the context a given story.

National leaders who played their parts in the crisis sometimes contacted Atlanta expressing a desire to appear before this world-wide audience, which included millions of plain citizens, but also the peer-group in the leadership club, the experts and officials who were advising the leaders, and the pundits who filled in the blanks, analyzing, criticizing, prophesying.

In a luncheon speech on the day following Mr. Turner's after-dinner performance, CBC reporter Ann Medina drew laughter and applause for her parody: "What worries me is you get this image of the future of the Larry King talk show where we have King Hussein on line two, we have Gadhafi on line one, who are we going to punch up first?" The parody was close to truth. Mr. Turner had described an incident where the Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi, who played the satanic role for President Ronald Reagan as Saddam Hussein does for President Bush, had telephoned four times clamouring for air time before anyone at CNN believed it really was Gadhafi. In the end, it proved impossible to connect his tent to a satellite link. King Hussein phoned the same night and went on the air, his palace presumably being better equipped for electronic journalism than Gadhafi's tent.

The leading adversaries in the contest of wills, George Bush and Saddam Hussein, were frequently seen on CNN and other networks, stating their rival cases to the peoples of the world, one of them sometimes speaking in a way that suggested an effort to persuade the other, and always trying to gain the moral advantage. Saddam, however, appeared to have little grasp of how his performances would be understood by people in the United States and its allies. For example, early in the crisis before the war began, he

organized what was apparently intended to be a touching and humanizing scene in which obviously terrified adult hostages from Western countries watched as he patted the heads and shook the hands of their small children. For Western viewers, this little soap opera came through as a ghastly attempt to use childdrenas fodder for the propaganda canons, a repulsive game played with human emotions. Saddam's showmanship backfired again when he paraded American and British pilots before the TV cameras. The pilots, with their droning recitations, their battered faces and cast-down eyes, told an unspoken but all too clear story of how they had been beaten and forced to give false testimony.

Of course all TV networks carried extensive coverage of the crisis and the war, including the CBC, CTV and Global TV. The point about CNN was that it carried very little else: its menu was news, live wherever possible, plus sports results and plenty of commercials for its vastly swollen audience of consumers. With a great world crisis unfolding, CNN was able to broadcast everything that happened publicly, usually when it happened, with repetitions of major developments, which was also useful since nobody can spend all their time in front of a TV set. As Geneviève Rossier of Radio-Canada said on the subject of press pools: "Journalists were hoping for a quick end of the war, because soon you would have to belong to a pool to go to the bathroom." CNN's format allowed even for that. Other networks used a lot of time on "talking heads" -- experts with some greater knowledge than the average viewer, who sometimes were successful in adding a dimension of useful background and interpretation. But in the fast-moving scenario of a one-month war, nothing could compete with the real thing.

Like other television productions, CNN's war produced a star -- Peter Arnett, a small, tough New Zealander and a veteran of the Vietnam press corps, whose pugnacious face and body language tells its own story. Arnett fought like a tiger, Mr. Turner said in a conversation before his speech, to stay in Baghdad when all remaining correspondents were told to leave the country on the outbreak of war. Some left on instruction of their employers. Some, including the BBC crew, objected and sought permission to stay. For whatever reasons, because of Arnett's personal tenacity or because Saddam Hussein recognized the direct-diplomacy potential and propaganda value of CNN, only Arnett's request was granted. For much of the war, CNN was the only Western news organization inside Iraq, and when Saddam wanted to say something to the world, he called in Arnett.

There was little information on other parts of the country, or even of the large city of Baghdad, but viewers of CNN did at least see the war through the eyes and lenses of Arnett and his camera crew, from the first scary shots from inside his hotel room to the dreadful scenes of carnage when an American bomb hit an air-raid shelter crammed with women and children. For showing this film footage, Arnett and CNN were bitterly attacked by some members of the US Congress – something that happens in every war when the written or the filmic word suggests that people in the enemy country are human too.

Almost the whole world, it is not too much to say, watched highlights of this story in "real time." If people in some parts of the world, particularly in the Arab world, thought the Western media did not cover it fairly from their point of view, it would still be hard to fault CNN, since so much of its coverage consisted of actuality film of actuality film of actual events, and the reportage that went with it, especially Arnett's, was painstakingly factual.

During a panel discussion mainly on other subjects (See Chapter V), Mark Starowicz, Executive Producer of CBC's *The Journal*, expressed reservations about live television as distinguished from carefully edited film documentary.

> Governments' press strategies and the sheer numbers of the press will continue reducing many world events to the level of mass photo opportunities. And I think a large part of the Gulf War can be described as a mass photo opportunity.
>
> This leads to a pernicious form of escalation, the escalation by anchor man.... It is a competition for the backdrop, the Berlin Wall or the blue domes of the Dhahran Hotel. Everybody thought it was part of a mosque, but, you know, the blue domes are over the pool.... Our man in Amman, in a shirt with epaulettes, has become the cargo-cult journalism of the satellite age. "If I am standing here live, and there is a minaret behind me, then I am a journalist and you should believe me."

"TV is still a very primitive medium," Starowicz said. The CBC has one Asia correspondent, who is expected to cover a continent of billions. The same could be said of some Canadian newspapers; but most have no Asia or foreign correspondents at all. However, the difference is that newspapers use international news agencies that do have

correspondents in many countries. Television almost ignores stories where a reporter cannot go and send back pictures.

Even one reporter is better than none, if he is good enough, and if he is in the right place at the right time, and if he can get his material to home base. Peter Arnett of CNN was such a reporter.

V TO BE A WITNESS, OR TO TAKE IT FROM TV?

Editors and news managers did not know in January what everybody learned at the end of February: that it was going to be a one-month war almost entirely waged from the air. The huge build-up of reporters in the desert was, like the huge build-up of foot-soldiers, based on the premise that they were facing a gruelling ground war of unpredictable length. This simple fact was not discussed at the CIIPS seminar. It helps to explain the apparently ludicrous picture of several thousand reporters in Saudi Arabia, mainly taking their information from briefings and other reports carried live on CNN, which editors and other home-bound colleagues could see for themselves in their offices. Sometimes, when briefing rooms were full, reporters watched in their hotel rooms, an environment not much different from home. As it turned out, the war could have been fairly well covered from Washington or any electronically equipped home base, but nobody knew that in January.

This also helps to answer General Sidle's complaint that a lot of small-town American newspapers cluttered up the scene with their own reporters instead of leaving it to the Associated Press, *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Post* -- "the biggies." These reporters were sent to do hometown stories on home-town GIs, a legitimate assignment for which they did not have to be experts on the Middle East. Canadian and other foreign reporters were there partly for similar reasons -- to cover our own troops in whatever action they might see, but also to provide a Canadian view, which, as we learned in Vietnam, was often very different from the viewpoint of American reporters.

Jeffrey Dworkin, a CBC radio news producer, was one who tried to change what he called "the gloomy gestalt of this meeting." He protested the negative view generally taken of the performance of the media, claiming for his own reporters a record of achievement in explaining to Canadian listeners what was going on and why. Mr. Viorst's "splendid" articles in *The New Yorker* had also been used as the basis for radio documentaries on the programmes *Sunday Morning* and *As It Happens*, he said.

Geneviève Rossier, whose short-notice performance on the first morning was widely praised by participants, won high marks for her work under frustrating circumstances in the Gulf. Aileen McCabe, who had spent two years in the region as Middle East correspondent for Southam News, showed both initiative and depth. Tied down with 900 others in Jordan, she produced a stream of analytical reports that ignored the pervasive propaganda and made an effort to convey the Arab peoples' point of view. But the editor and general manager of Southam News, Jim Travers, was dissatisfied with the overall performance of the Canadian news contingent.

> The Canadian part of the struggle was so small that we really didn't have a real military story... We were unable as a press corps to put enough pressure on the federal government...to explain why they weren't pushing the United States to try and make sanctions work... We put ourselves in a position where we could quite easily be conned, partially because of our reliance on US sources, which, once the conflict started, proved to be surprisingly jingoistic...including some highly respected organizations...I don't feel at the end of it that we as journalists were able to supply the information necessary in a democracy for people to assess the issues and analyze correctly the prosecution of the war.... The public was in no mood to rally around us and in fact was quite happy to see the constraints put on the press, and I think that's something that should concern us very, very deeply.

A tonic for frustrated self-critics was provided at lunch on the second day by Ann Medina, a CBC reporter, producer and veteran foreign correspondent. She set forth an apparently simple, but actually difficult creed: that the job of a reporter is to be a witness.

> Yes, there's no such thing as pure objectivity, but there is in our gut. We all have some recognition of more subjective or less subjective, more objective or less objective. It does make a difference when a reporter goes out and tries to toss away all the baggage, all the biases, all the preconceptions. They don't succeed but they try to shed all that and to tell you what they saw...
>
> How does this reporting work? If you take as a given that even in normal times, any government, any opposition, any interest group, is going to want to slant the information a little bit, we all do, whatever we're in, sometimes maybe even push that little parameter of truth a bit. If all this takes place in peacetime, what about in wartime? In wartime the stakes are high. In wartime, if somebody loses the game, the consequences are greater. The pressures for deception, the pressures for changing a little bit about the truth of events, the temptations to do that...are greater than at any other time. In

> war there is also, on either side, a tendency towards self-deception, where one side wants to think that they are doing all right, that they are winning. There's the wishful thinking... How does one witness, how does one find the truth with all these deceptions and self-deceptions and rapid change? Do we rely...upon officials, upon leaders, upon experts?

Drawing on her own experiences in Africa, China and the Middle East, Ms. Medina stressed how often the official version or prediction is wrong and how the extra effort required to go and see and talk to the people involved can uncover the truth, or at least some part of it. In the Gulf War, reporters were rarely able to do this; they were reduced to conveying official information, much of it deliberately or inadvertently wrong. One of the reasons Mr. Viorst's work won respect was that he went on his own, not as a member of any pool or organized tour, and reported his personal findings, based on observation and interviews inside Iraq and Kuwait before the lids were screwed down. And what about the times when a reporter cannot go and find out personally? Well, said Ms. Medina in answer to a question, let's at least preserve some doubts about whether what we have been told is the truth.

In an overall summing-up at the end of seminar, John Honderich, editor of *The Toronto Star*, questioned the idea that it was necessary to join pools. *The Star* reporter Kevin Donovan, after spending one day in Riyadh, rented a car and, with two American reporters and a Swede, drove north to somewhere near the front. For three weeks he filed war stories to *The Star*, as did his companions to their newspapers, without any interference or complaint from US military authorities.

The Star's surveys showed that 75 percent of its readers used television as their primary source of information on the Gulf crisis. Yet in the five days after the war began, daily circulation rose between 40 percent and 60 percent. This showed that even though people watched CNN, they needed more, Mr. Honderich said. "They went to print for perspective."

VI WHY SOME SMALLER WARS ARE BIGGER NEWS THAN BIGGER ONES: CONFLICT AND THE JOURNALIST AS PLAYER

Although the seminar was dominated by issues raised by coverage of the recent war in the Gulf, its mandate was broader: The role of the media in international conflict. Discussion touched on what Bernard Wood called "the First Gulf War," between Iran and Iraq; on the Palestinian rebellion against Israel, the *Intifadah*; and on hostage-takings, a subject dealt with by two journalists who had become, in different ways, players in those grim dramas.

Vietnam was often mentioned by American participants because of the pivotal role played by the news media in that first "living-room war," and the bitterness between the military and the media that followed. It was not just the novelty and high drama of a televised war that was important. It was also the ways in which newspaper and TV reportage both influenced and reflected public opinion in the United States. In the early stages of the long conflict, mainstream opinion favoured the war, which was seen as part of the worldwide crusade to contain communism. Americans became more and more critical as promises of quick victory proved illusory, and the "body count" -- a Vietnam military phrase -- rose in numbers and emotional power.

The rising tide of anger against the war forced President Lyndon Johnson to abandon hope of re-election in 1968. His successor, the anti-communist hawk Richard Nixon, ended the war in unacknowledged defeat. Such is the potential power of uncensored news coverage in conditions where the society accepts openness and where technology permits immediate transmission of words and film.

At the other extreme of contemporary war coverage were conflicts in Ethiopia and the Ogaden, in the Sudan, in Liberia, and between Iran and Iraq. Compared with the massive coverage of what turned out to be a one-month war last winter, these protracted conflicts were under-covered. One important reason was that neither the United States nor any other Western nation was directly involved. Another was that access to these theatres of war was difficult. The Sudan excluded journalists almost completely.

Both sides in the Iran/Iraq War allowed only brief, tightly controlled visits to the front. Foreign correspondents took considerable risks on trips from the Iranian side, which were designed to show the ferocity of battle. Iraq's conducted tours were offered in quiet periods so film could be taken of bloated corpses after battle. Either way, reporters were not allowed to wander far from supervision.

Another reason for the sporadic interest in these wars might be that there were no obvious "good guys" to cheer nor "bad guys" to revile. On television, sports and fictional dramas are contained and resolved within an hour or two, usually by virtue of heroes. Many viewers, even producers, conditioned to a clear choice of home team and good cop, may be ill-prepared for years of inconclusive war for who knows what objectives. The war between Iran and Iraq began with an invasion of Iranian territory launched by Saddam Hussein, already identified by Washington as a major-league villain. On the other hand, Iran was at the nadir of public favour in the United States, and the West generally, because of the episode in which fifty-two members of the US embassy staff in Teheran had been held hostage in their compound for 444 days. The Western mood was "a plague on both your houses." US policy was aimed at helping Iraq, but not so the public would notice. The press, in a preview of 1990/91, did little to probe this contradiction.

The contemporaneous war in a more remote country -- Afghanistan -- was far more thoroughly covered by both print and broadcast media. Here, from a Western viewpoint, was a perceived right and wrong. The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan to prop up a puppet ruler, and the Mujahideen guerrillas fought for nine years until the Soviet army pulled out. (Afghans continued to fight among themselves, but the world lost interest.)

These questions were raised at the seminar, if not always answered. Jim Travers, who covered part of the Iran/Iraq war for Southam News, said he did not know why it was difficult to attract the interest of readers in a conflict that he saw as of major importance. Mark Starowicz, of the CBC, said that despite eight years of war and a million casualties, "it might have happened on another planet," so far as television was concerned. Others said it was because in TV news, if there are no pictures, there is no story.

The *Intifadah* provides a different case study, and it gave seminar participants an interesting visual sample of how several TV networks covered a particular incident in a West Bank Arab village. On the conflict between the Palestinian Arabs and their Israeli rulers, almost everyone has an opinion, often a strong one. Coverage by both newspapers and broadcasters is watched with eagle eyes by defenders of both sides, and reporters who cover the story know that whatever they say will annoy someone.

Akiba Cohen, professor of communications at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, began by saying that in Israel everybody seems to be claiming unfair coverage of the *Intifadah*. Bumper stickers say, "People Against Hostile Media." After the killings of Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in 1982, identical news clips were shown to separate groups of pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli viewers in the United States. "Those who were pro-Palestinian, pro-Arab felt that the media were entirely biased in favour of the Israeli position. Those who were pro-Israeli felt that the media were entirely biased in favour of the Arab or Palestinian position."

Professor Cohen's studies indicated that if TV coverage is considered over time and rated statistically, it becomes more similar on the various networks, even though on any given night the coverage is different. He showed TV coverage of an incident in which four Palestinian villagers were killed in a confrontation with the Israeli army; a fifth died of wounds later. The clips were from US, British, French, German and Israeli networks. Each was different in the way the film was used, showing events in different sequences. Three networks used film of events at another village the same day to illustrate the story, without explaining that the film was taken elsewhere. The BBC, whose reporter provided voice-over from Cyprus, said six had died and quoted Israelis as saying that one had died and four were wounded. The Israeli reporter said four had died. The major difference was that Israeli television showed no bodies, or only glimpses. Its film showed long shots of the village and a short struggle in the street. The other networks showed the street battle and the dead at close quarters.

Professor Cohen commented: "These clips show a lot of violence, but over time the amount of violence and killing shown is rather small proportionately, showing that

the networks seek to achieve balance over time." Summarizing the discussion later, John Honderich of *The Toronto Star* said that the differences between the rival networks' film was not surprising, since there is not only one right way to tell a story.

Florian Sauvageau, professor of communications at Laval University, Quebec City, discussing televised violence, tried to separate needed information from sensationalism. In the Iraq war, the showing of beaten prisoners' faces once, he said, was information; showing it ten times was sensationalism. He applied this judgment to repeated showings of a Quebec flag being trampled underfoot in Ontario. In a study of the confrontation between Mohawk Indians and soldiers at Oka in 1990, his students had found television coverage "sensationalistic and confusing through repetition." On the other hand, an American study had concluded that TV film of Kurdish refugees in Iraq had "changed the attitude of President Bush" (towards greater sympathy for the Kurds). An overwhelming majority of TV viewers say that showing violence encourages violence; TV producers say it does not. The political question is how to find a balance, Professor Sauvageau said.

Commenting on these contributions, Bernard Wood said that print journalism was no less selective. CNN had attained the peak of power because of all we had gone through in the last two or three years, but not all of that was violence; it was drama. "People were just as gripped by those velvet revolutions."

Mr. Starowicz said he was uncomfortable with live TV, preferring the carefully edited documentary approach -- "but you can't put the genie back in the bottle." After mentioning the weak coverage of the Iran/Iraq war, he added a non-military example of CBC news judgment: 140,000 died in the Bangladesh floods last spring, but that was "not considered worth bringing to bear our technology."

Another panel brought out the experiences of two journalists who had been closely involved with hostage situations. Roger Auque, a former Beirut correspondent for Radio-Canada and a writer for *Paris Match*, was himself a hostage for nearly a year. Jean Pelletier, now of *Le Journal de Montréal*, was the Washington-based correspondent who won a world scoop on the story of the American hostages who escaped custody by hiding in the Canadian Embassy in Teheran.

Mr. Auque recalled standing on a hotel balcony the night of his release, looking at the stars, which he had not seen for a year, and thinking, "I'm the best negotiator to release others. That would be using the press in a positive way." The press is used in many ways during a hostage situation, and he argued that this is necessary. Captors use the press to make demands, delivered in brown envelopes by motorcycle courier. Demands are rejected through the media, but even if they are used as mouthpieces for terrorists, that often assists in negotiations.

"Americans have a kind of naive belief in not negotiating with terrorists, but they benefit as much as anyone else." Asked whether it would not be better if journalists did not write about hostage-takings, he answered: "No! I'm a journalist and I've been a hostage and I think press stories are needed." An American diplomat had once told him that being captured was the hostage's fault, and that the US government would not change its policy to help a few people. "I think he should remember that the American government has a responsibility to protect its citizens abroad."

Mr. Pelletier, who kept the secret of the hostages in the Canadian embassy until he was sure they were out of danger, was asked when a journalist should forebear to publish. "I have no recipe, or magic formula. I couldn't take the decision myself, I discussed it with my bosses, and finally it was left to me. I decided to keep the secret rather than endanger lives. The press often has to keep secrets." He agreed with Mr. Auque that the media should make sure that hostages are not forgotten. The worst media mistake in the case of the embassy hostages, Mr. Pelletier said, was the proclamation by a TV network that "America was held hostage." Evidently this sensational exaggeration, which he attributed to the ABC network, fired the pride of the hostage-takers in their violation of international law and diplomatic immunity.

VII CONCLUSION: PUTTING A SPOTLIGHT ON TWO SOCIETIES, THEIR MILITARY ROLES AND MEDIA ATTITUDES

The CIIPS seminar highlighted the very dissimilar roles that Canada and the United States play in the world, the striking differences in the two societies created by separate historical experiences, the vast imbalance in their military strength and how their media reflect these contrasts.

On the first morning, Colin MacKenzie of *The Globe and Mail* remarked on how much more militarized a society the United States is. Compared with them, we don't have much of an army, he said, hastening to add: "I think that's a good thing, but it doesn't make much of a story." Rear-Admiral Larry Murray heartily disagreed, on the basis that Canada's peacekeeping operations around the world make a great story. Yet in a way, his argument strengthened the point. Canada has a small army performing good, useful work in defusing dangerous situations. Our soldiers are helping to prevent simmering sources of conflict from boiling over into front-page headlines -- the kind that send anchormen in shirts with epaulettes scurrying to distant corners of the globe.

The US Army fights in more wars than Canada does, with many more men -- and now women -- per capita in uniform. Every small town has boys in the service, which means news of some sort for every medium from *The New York Times* and CNN to small-town weeklies and local radio. The British and French also keep many more people in service than Canada does, probably because, like the United States, they still behave at times like the full-blown imperial powers they once were. They are willing to spend the money on the troops and equipment required to make this kind of role possible when they think it is required.

These differences are reflected in our debates on international conflict, and our definitions of the public interest. Well qualified to talk about this was Rajhida Dergham, a Lebanese-born American citizen who lives in New York as correspondent for the London-based Arab newspaper *Al-Hayat*, and a regular commentator on Middle Eastern subjects for both CBC and PBS, the American public network.

"My view is that, after Watergate, the American press became tamed. It stopped going after the government," Ms. Dergham said

> Protecting national interests became the de facto priority of the media. The issue of national interests graduated into the issue of national security during the Gulf crisis, and let's note that Congress was much braver than the media. Congressmen went on record, debating the choice between war or embargo or sanctions to reverse Saddam Hussein's aggression against Kuwait, while the media refrained from doing its homework. Instead, the media was falling victim to the brilliant packaging of the war.

As examples of Madison Avenue packaging, she pointed to the portrayal of Saddam as another Hitler, the effort to disguise the nature of the Kuwaiti leadership, the description of Kuwait as a democracy, which it has never been. "The media marched in lock-step with the government towards war," Ms. Dergham said.

> To kick the Vietnam syndrome, the government decided there would be no pictures of pain or blood, or dead children. I think the media became the mouthpiece for the government, it gave up its privilege of free criticism, reinforced the us-versus-them syndrome. "We" were the strong US; "they" were either the enemy or the irrelevant weak. When patriotism becomes ethnocentric, it's dangerous.

Explaining how the American media stifled dissent, Ms. Dergham said that her own appearances on PBS were suspended without explanation, and that the prominent Democrat, Ramsey Clark, who attempted a personal peace mission, was given slight coverage. A regular on the PBS programme MacNeil-Lehrer Report for more than ten years, she was dropped for about three months shortly after the Iraq-Kuwait crisis began, although the Middle East is her area of expertise. The CBC consistently used her on both radio and TV public affairs programmes. After PBS had taken heavy criticism for its one-note commentary on the war, she was "rediscovered" and put on the show three times running. "This is a difference between American media and Canadian media, and there is a big difference," she said.

On the same panel, Ann Nelson an American who has worked for CBC's *The Journal* and *Maclean's*, as well as PBS, charged the US media with extensive self-censorship, not for reasons of security, but to mislead the American public on the nature

of the war. "There is no such thing as a splendid little war. The press, to its shame, bought the package."

The third member of this panel on "defining the public interest" was William Solomon, a member of the faculty in the Department of Journalism and Mass Media at Rutgers University. He also condemned the US media's performance in the Gulf crisis. "Iraq was not so evil, nor Kuwait so innocent, as George Bush's images would suggest," he said. The sources and commentators used by print and broadcast media were right-wing think tanks and only rarely peace groups or leftist opponents of the war. Television's images of high-tech equipment "sanitized the killing.... At the war's end, Dan Rather shook a general's hand and said, 'Congratulations on a job wonderfully done'."

Canadian speakers, not nearly so emotionally involved in the war, seemed more aware of the separate and often clashing objectives of the armies and the messengers. In his summing-up of the seminar, *The Toronto Star*'s John Honderich agreed with the military speakers there was a natural tension between journalists and soldiers. "It is not going to go away. The problem is to distinguish between legitimate security and what are often political considerations."

APPENDICES

A PRE-WAR COVERAGE -- DID IT MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE? -- Milton Viorst

Did the media coverage of the war make a difference? My answer is that you bet it did. I'm proud to be a journalist. I think on the whole we conduct ourselves with professionalism and integrity and I'm glad to be a member of this craft. But I'm not one of those people who think we set the international agenda. I think the international agenda is set by governments and people. In the interaction between governments and people I think that we have an extremely essential job, particularly in a democratic society such as ours. If we don't do our job, the role of the people on governments is nullified I think that's what happened in this last Gulf crisis, we didn't do our job and I think that we came up with the wrong answer.

I was in Kuwait last month and I learned a story there that I'm ashamed I missed because I spent a whole year covering this. I was told by a Kuwaiti dissident in London, where I stopped on the way to Kuwait, that General Schwarzkopf had been to Kuwait several times in the months before the war for discussions with the Kuwaiti government. My source was a dissident and I treated this information with some scepticism. I had never heard it before -- perhaps there are some of you here who do know this.

But I got to Kuwait and I asked an American diplomat about it and he said sure, sure, he was here quite often before the war. It was part of his responsibility as a member of the Central Command; his job was to give confidence to the Kuwaitis that if they got into any trouble with Iraq, we were standing behind them. Then I got around to looking up the most recent biography of General Schwarzkopf by two competent journalists, and they didn't quite confirm that information but they did say, that when General Schwarzkopf took over the Central Command shortly after the end of the Iran-Iraq war, its orientation was the traditional orientation of the American policy-makers in the region, based upon the Carter doctrine, and that is that the danger was coming from the Soviet Union and from Iran. It was General Schwarzkopf's contribution to the Central Command that he totally transformed it into directing its attention towards the threat that he saw from Iraq.

Later I had an interview with Sheikh Salim, not spelled S-O-L-E-M-N although he does look a little bit that way. He's the Foreign Minister of Kuwait and I asked him this question and he said sure, Schwarzkopf was here several times prior to the war as part of a general programme of consultation with the Americans and he saw the Emir, the Minister of Defence and he gave us a great deal of confidence in our dealing with Iraq during the period of crisis. I was a little surprised at how easy it was to put the pieces of this story together. It was just a matter of asking the right questions. I think journalists didn't know which questions to ask and I think we got led astray.

Well, what is the significance of this item of information about General Schwarzkopf? It's just one more piece, it seems to me, in the puzzle. Maybe it proved how smart General Schwarzkopf was and how precocious he was about where the threat was coming from. Depending upon your perspective, that might be a legitimate explanation. Or if you're cynical, you might say it proves that like any good and ambitious general, he was looking for a war to fight before he retired and that he had a vested interest in a war with Iraq. I think his next biographer may look a little bit more carefully into that, because it certainly is not outside the realm of possibility. Or you might see it the other way around, and this is the principal issue as I saw it, that it was one more item of evidence, that the United States had a great deal of influence on the attitude of Kuwait in the months prior to the invasion. And perhaps this was a very unhealthy attitude in terms of a tense set of negotiations that were then under way with Iraq.

Many of us forget after all, that Kuwait was involved, in the spring and summer of 1990, in these very tense negotiations with Iraq. We have forgotten that George Bush was telling us rather stridently how brutal, how unprovoked was the invasion of Kuwait by this Hitler clone whose only interest was aggression. I fully agree with all of those terms, but it's only part of the picture. He is a pretty awful fellow. I certainly agree that he had no right to invade Kuwait, but I think we have to understand much more about the context in which all of this happened. There is much more to the story.

Certainly the President didn't tell us. The President in his role as chief propagandist for the United States told us what he wanted us to know, but the problem was that the press did not challenge what he was saying; the press took Bush's line along

with the hook and the sinker. I read *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* every day, and see something of television. In the American press, I saw no evidence of anything very different from President Bush's agenda, not just in the editorials, which I think were overwhelming, but most notably in the coverage and perhaps even more importantly in the interpretation of this coverage. They never went beyond it.

Sure, there was some wonderful reporting in the months before the war. There were wonderful stories about preparedness and the coalition, and our military strategy, and our weapons, and stories about the embargo. Not very many people seemed to be asking whether the embargo should exist at all because there was another way to have gone about resolving the problem. Nobody questioned Bush's description and so we never obtained, Congress didn't obtain, the American people didn't obtain the information needed to challenge the President on the subject of a war, which I believe could have been avoided.

The period was very complex. There certainly was no shortage of villains and incompetents. Saddam Hussein had more than a surplus of that on his side of it. He was incredibly clumsy in the way he handled this challenge. Had he been smarter it is conceivable that he would have beaten back the Bush agenda. He listened to his friends rather than listening to those people in Iraq who have had some experience with the outside world. I think that Saddam hunkered down in the crisis and listened to those upon whom he felt he could most readily depend. They were his relatives, the people who had been with him from the very beginning. And what happened was that he fell into a trap, a victim of his own savage world view.

But what about the blunders that were committed from January to August during this long period when there was an effort to work out the problems between Kuwait and Iraq. I think these were legitimate questions. The Emir of Kuwait, said that for all practical purposes Saddam was seeking to destroy the sovereignty of Kuwait. I have not seen any evidence to corroborate that. What we do now know is that there was a significant dispute over oil prices and the role that Kuwait was playing in manipulating those prices. I suspect now, in retrospect, that Kuwait's role was exaggerated, but it did have a significant role notwithstanding.

There was a dispute over borders. You might say that greedy politicians are always trying to push out their borders, but that's a little oversimplified when we talk about the Middle East. None are what anybody would call natural borders; they are borders that were drawn up in the course of years in London and in Paris and then imposed upon the region. It is generally recognized that there are mistakes, to be generous about it, in almost all Middle East borders and as a result it is not unusual for countries, perhaps both of them, to argue over the same border. There was a dispute over the line between Kuwait and Iraq which was drawn by a British diplomat in the 1920s. The Iraqis have never accepted this border. The Kuwaitis have always tried to have it reaffirmed by Iraq and it has refused to do so. And now I find that the path passed through some reasonably valuable oil territory. But more importantly, it gave to Kuwait a couple of islands which happened to be simply sandpits in the Persian Gulf. From Kuwait's point of view nobody can live on them, there is no oil there, there is no vegetation. They are of no value to Kuwait. Iraq wants them because they happen to be situated right in front of an area where the Iraqis have been in the process of building a port on the Persian Gulf. As you know Iraq, in the course of the decolonization period, got dished out of a decent port on the Persian Gulf. The Kuwaitis have said they are not going to turn these islands over.

There was a dispute over forgiveness of the debt, another legitimate question. According to the Iraqis, they fought the long Iraq-Iran war during which Kuwait and Saudi Arabia lent Iraq something in the range of $30 or $40 billion. The Iraqis emerged from the Iraq-Iran war rather impoverished and asked that the debts be forgiven, something like the debts that were forgiven by the United States of the European powers after World War II. The Kuwaitis stonewalled and did not agree to forgive those debts. Finally, this last small item: some accusations that the Kuwaitis were drilling across the lines into the Rumaila oil field. The oil people I talked to in Kuwait indicated that there was good reason to believe that maybe the Kuwaitis were stealing in effect, what might be called Iraqi oil. These were not total fabrications, they were eminently negotiable issues on which Kuwait failed to give any ground at all.

We weren't paying very much attention to it in the United States, but Saddam warned repeatedly, that if Kuwait did not take a more reasonable position, it really

endangered itself, and he used some rather explicit words in letting it be known that he might indeed have aggressive designs. Certainly, Kuwait failed to take into account the disparity of power between a little tiny country which for all practical purposes had no defence at all and a huge country like Iraq with this 1,000,000-man army that came out of the Iraq-Iran war. It was a little like Noriega provoking the big bully to the North, and we know what happened to him.

In capitals all over the region, Amman and Cairo, particularly diplomats and leaders were saying, what's going on here? What is this risky game that the Kuwaitis are playing? What's behind it, they can't possibly be doing all of this on their own. I heard this quite often; is this some American game? Well it's not up to me to say how the negotiations should have turned out. That was up to them. But I have no doubt that the Kuwaitis were influenced in their negotiating strategy by the things that Schwarzkopf was saying to them, by the fact that they thought that America was standing behind them. There was a time, I must confess, when I first got into the story that I thought it was a general conspiracy -- that somehow the United States and Kuwait were accomplices in this effort to undermine Iraq. And I looked very hard and I can't rule this out, but I have found no evidence that there was any definite, preconceived plan on this matter. But I think that there need not be: the Kuwaitis have a reputation among Arabs and among others who need them. They are very charming people, but they like their money, they are very greedy. This has been an intrinsic part of their recent history, certainly since the discovery of this huge wealth in oil that they have beneath their territory and it makes sense that the fact that they feel they have the United States behind them, seriously changes the negotiating positions that they would have taken had they felt a little more naked in the face of Iraqi power.

This was confirmed for me by Sheikh Ali -- currently the Finance Minister. He had been the Oil Minister and the Oil Ministry was largely subsumed by the Finance Ministry, so he was one of the key players in all of these negotiations. He told me that he was influenced in all the time he talked to the Iraqis by the fact that he knew he had American support. And he said to me furthermore that he thought Saddam was pretty stupid not to understand this.

There was the famous incident about our poor Ambassador April Glaspie who is now teaching school in San Diego the last I heard. The orders that she was under were that if Saddam came to her and said why doesn't the United States do something in this extremely dangerous situation that is building up between our two countries, between Iraq and Kuwait, why doesn't the United States intercede because this situation is becoming inflamed, she was to say we regard this an Arab-Arab problem, it is not our affair, you must deal with this yourself.

In fact, far from telling Saddam Hussein that he had the United States' authorization to attack Kuwait, in fact what she was saying was that the United States was telling Saddam was to go to hell. And so I think the situation got worse and worse and what happened? Saddam made the blunder of occupying Kuwait, all of Kuwait, not just the small disputed areas of the north. It's rather interesting that it's generally acknowledged by the Kuwaiti government and other governments including, if you look at the record, our own government, that if Saddam had simply occupied that disputed area in the north, we would have had to handle the question entirely differently.

The Iraqis had done this before in disputes with Kuwait. They had occupied some border posts, and the Kuwaitis would go about their business and then the Arab League or someone would come along and they would have a little negotiation and work it out with a payment and a movement there, and the Iraqis would leave.

And it was clear, if you look back at the record, that in the first few days Saddam himself was confused about what he was up to. The first couple of days you remember he looked around with a great deal of effort to find a puppet government that he might set up in Kuwait and that failed. Over the course of the first few days, he said publicly that he was going to withdraw some time during the following week and obviously he didn't do that. He talked of several things, and meanwhile there was a rather frenetic effort being undertaken by some Arab powers, most notably King Hussein, to work this whole thing out in the traditional Arab fashion, if I can use those terms, which is to give everybody a little something in order to avoid a catastrophe. Apparently, Mubarak concurred in this effort and there are even some signs the Saudis and the Kuwaitis were willing to go along with it.

We don't quite know what was going on in the White House as I look back at the record. I don't think Bush had made up his mind because for the first twenty-four hours he wasn't quite clear himself what to do. And strangely, he had a meeting that week with Mrs. Thatcher who happened to be in the United States, and after the meeting with Mrs. Thatcher he came down with this very hard line.

And we know that he then proceeded to discourage the negotiations not only among the Arabs, (in fact we might even use the word veto, it would not be totally inappropriate) over the course of the ensuing months, so that everybody who tried to intercede in this effort in order to conduct some mediation talks were told that they were not welcome to continue.

Bush's strategy after this first day or so was diplomacy by ultimatum, which was the strategy of the Hapsburgs in 1914, if you recall. It was to give no concessions whatever and to prepare for war. Well, you might say, and certainly many Americans said, and certainly all the world newspapers said, why should you grant concessions to an aggressor. And there is a certain moral position and one can't dismiss it totally, but there is another answer, and that is if you grant no concessions you take a huge risk of war and wars often turn out, as the Hapsburgs found, in a way you don't foresee. They don't wind up quite the way you would like them to do.

This was, after all, a legitimate diplomatic conflict. I like to compare it with the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. I think the United States recognized that it could not live with what the other side had committed and which was for a moment a *fait accompli* -- bringing the missiles into Cuba. President Kennedy made quite clear that the Soviet Union would have to get the missiles out of Cuba, but on the other hand he was willing to allow the Soviets to walk away having saved faced. He did not seek to humiliate Khrushchev, he made this look as if there were some *quid pro quos* involved, and I think there were some *quid pro quos* involved, although what we delivered was rather insignificant.

And I think we could have done the same thing with Iraq. I don't know that, I am no prophet, I can't tell you this would have worked; but I do know that we didn't try it. I think we could have said to Saddam Hussein by whatever diplomatic channel we chose to use, that in return for his evacuation of Kuwait we would agree to mediate his dispute with Kuwait, and if perhaps he didn't trust us, we would toss in the Secretary-General of the United Nations or the Secretary-General of the Arab League. But there was an ongoing and legitimate and serious and understandable diplomatic dispute going on between Kuwait and Iraq and it deserved to be solved, not by invasion and absorption, but by diplomacy. Bush, it seems to me, had this available if what he wanted to do was to avoid war.

There probably was another available course and that was to promise that in return for the evacuation of Kuwait we would get on with negotiations in the Arab-Israeli conflict. This was also rejected on the grounds that it would be a concession, but it was not really a concession because we have been saying this is our policy for twenty years and it didn't make much difference except as a matter of timing to announce that we were going into this new and more energetic effort to get negotiations going. Both of these would have been a way for Saddam to make certain claims of victory, certain claims of saving face, but we were determined that this was not admissible. The President made clear that it was important for him to humiliate Saddam Hussein. He also made clear that it was important to him to drive the man out of office. He wanted to destroy Saddam's war-making potential. He wanted to make sure that the United States emerged from all of this as the uncontested political power in the Gulf.

Well, I'm not sure that he humiliated Saddam Hussein. I spent much of the spring in Baghdad and the guy is still riding high. We certainly know that he didn't get him out of office. As far as his war-making potential is concerned, he's not a threat for the moment to much of the region, but we certainly have to acknowledge, and perhaps we know it only retrospectively, that Saddam only had his third-rate army and he was not in much of a position to become our rival in the Gulf no matter what.

Iran was on its heels, the Soviet Union for all practical purposes was no longer an element in the region, there was only Iraq. Perhaps we over-reacted, but we certainly

did succeed within this last war with the Iraqis in doing what we have been more or less doing since 1971, and that is replacing the British as the power in the Gulf.

So it's been a good war. I mean we're lucky it's been a good war. How bad a war can it be when 125 or 130 Americans are killed? It doesn't sound so good if you happen to be the mother of one of them, but if you're not it doesn't seem like much of a price to pay. But I don't think that was fore-ordained. It could have gone a lot differently. I think there are many of us who really did believe it was going to be a little tougher than it turned out to be. But it turned out to be pretty easy and the only people who really suffered in all of this were the Iraqis and in some considerable measure the Kuwaitis. We and all the participants on our side of the alliance came out looking pretty good.

And so in a sense, I guess the press is on firm ground because like all the American public generally, it went with the winner. Maybe -- and I think that there was a touch of it in some of the talks that we had this morning in both the morning session and the afternoon session -- maybe the press was feeling some sort of crisis of confidence. I have been trying to evaluate this for a long time. Maybe there is some residual feeling that like the army, the press itself thinks we overstepped in Vietnam. Maybe we did intrude ourselves. I think that much of the press has been playing a little heavily in making history rather than just reporting it. And maybe after Vietnam and after Watergate and after Irangate and after a whole range of incidents in which, in my judgment, we really did our duty brilliantly, (I mean the kinds of thing that makes us proud to be journalists, that is providing the information for the American public and its leadership to make decisions) maybe we kind of lost our sense of ourselves. But something happened in this, and I believe we really did a lousy job in bringing this information to the people of the United States in order for them to make a valid well-informed decision about the war. I think we ought to be ashamed of ourselves!

B THE POWER AND THE GLORY -- Ed Turner

Last Friday at CNN we received a phone call from the head of the Lithuanian government in Washington who is there to set up his government's liaison with the US and in the call, the man said he just wanted us to know, I'm quoting him now, "that without CNN he did not believe the Baltics and his country in particular would have been free today." I was so taken aback at such a passionate statement, so well-meant and not coming from our own public relations department, that I was reminded at the time of a dinner given in the honour of Dr. Henry Kissinger when a woman came up to him and said, "Dr. Kissinger, thank you for saving the world" and he said, "you're welcome." I said to the man who called so kindly, "you're welcome."

When I sat down to write this little talk in the middle of August I was thinking what a shame that there is nothing new to update, events in the world or at CNN. During the three days of the Soviet coup, if I may chat about that for just a moment, we kept thinking every hour that the plug would be pulled. We knew that CNN was being seen throughout Moscow in the government ministries, in a good many of the hotels and apartment complexes with other cable or satellite dishes. We were also told that many of the republics were putting CNN on their stations for broadcast over the air and running us with translation. Several of the deputies attending the Supreme Soviet said they watched CNN in their home countries. Writing in *Newsweek*, Edward Shevardnadze said "Praised be information technology, praised be CNN." Anyone who owned a parabolic antenna able to receive this network's transmission had a complete picture of what was going on.

Pardon this bit of puffery. The examples serve to tell us again what we already thought. The old world of tyrants and despots cannot isolate themselves any longer. When I asked why we were not unplugged, I was told that the order went down to some mid-level bureaucrat, who was a Gorbachev appointee, and who in effect ignored it with the explanation that to unplug CNN would violate an international contract and he did not have the authority to abrogate that contract. As you know the BBC, VOA and Radio Liberty continue to transmit. Gorbachev said he listened to them. To our dismay, the satellite dish that we had given him was apparently not working.

Across the Soviet Union, as you may know, faxes were sent, telephone calls to Western journalists, and to radio and television news programmes were made, home video was shot and sent to Western television networks. The dramatic footage of the demonstrators in front of the Russian Parliament building at night, throwing Molotov cocktails at tanks was shot by an amateur photographer and sent by courier to our bureau. He came in, he was extremely nervous and he asked our bureau chief if we would be interested in showing this footage. We allowed as how we were very interested. I was told that CNN was a great magnet during those days following the coup and I asked if it was because we were such daring and forthright journalists and I was told no, it was because we had free food.

Presidents Gorbachev and Yeltsin told our people that they were grateful for the CNN service during the coup and the times of uncertainty that followed. And when they agreed to be interviewed by us as the story was unfolding, we learned the decision was based in part on our ability to set up and produce the programmes quickly. We also know that Gorbachev was most anxious to have the interview broadcast in the Soviet Union, thus we asked that he consider having a Soviet journalist join us. That seemed to be the single element that did the trick for us in what, as I'm sure you know, is a very competitive situation, with the networks of the world over there and the newspapers and wire services trying to get him.

As has been mentioned, the title for this talk given to me by our big thinking host was "The Power and the Glory." Let me assure you that fame is fleeting and even after the most cataclysmic of events someone still has to make the lunch and so that is what we are doing here tonight, and sometimes I think after listening to this panel today, it was feeding on its own.

If you would like to know what it's like, to be in a global television news operation during the middle of a crisis, to illustrate: we were getting many, many crank phone calls. At the height of the looniness, our foreign editor took a call from a person identifying himself as Moammar Gadhafi who wanted to be interviewed. And the foreign editor did as I would have done, "Yeah, sure" and hung up. So after the fourth phone call, sure enough it was Moammar Gadhafi. Like any good journalist we put him on and no, he

didn't make any news. He wanted to be on live via satellite and was really offended when we explained that we did not have the opportunity at the moment to rush an uplink to his tent from which he was calling, according his staff aides, outside Tunis.

Given the pace of events in our news network, the Gulf War now seems rather distant. For example, since then we have had to confront and cover -- often live via our own portable uplinks and let me assure you in the States anything is portable, an elephant would be portable if it had a handle on it -- those stories to remind you include the Bangladesh floods and the deaths from that, the Kurdish refugee disaster. We were live from Turkey, Iraq and Northern Iran the first time ever for a live broadcast from Northern Iran and I hope it's our last! We had live reporting from Northern Ireland, the Ethiopian-Somalian famine, the break-up of Yugoslavia, the economic summit in London and in Moscow. This is not to say I am offering a travelogue in lieu of a speech. Rather to say we continue to collect evidence that television news does have an impact on the conduct of foreign policy, but no one knows how much. Some things we do know: heads of state and their aides do most certainly watch CNN and our fellow broadcasters; leaders of institutions such as other networks, newspapers, think-tanks, academia, corporations are close and careful viewers of the news product.

We believe we are a factor in the decision-making, but of course, to what extent is unclear. But for fear one would believe too many of the compliments CNN has received, you only have to recall the thought expressed by that singular Chinese leader Chou-en-lai when he was asked to assess the effects of the French Revolution on modern-day China, he said "it is too early to know."

There are some conclusions and strategies I think we are learning from this global picture. First off -- hardly a bulletin -- governments will use and manipulate if they can. The manipulatee must determine whether what is being offered is newsworthy. Often the material is propaganda and there is nothing new in that. However, it still can be news within the context of that particular story. In accepting the said pieces, a prepared statement or an official offer for an interview, television is not doing anything particularly new. Newspapers have been a similar vehicle for hundreds of years. Ours is just faster, the results more quickly known.

The Gulf War with George Bush and Saddam Hussein, King Hussein and President Gorbachev talking back and forth via satellite, accelerated the diplomatic process. More recently, in the early weeks in Yugoslavia, I believe we have an example of the diffusing of a story. The parties and issues they represent were vented almost hourly via the live flyaway satellite uplink CNN had in Slovenia, along with other networks, both in Slovenia, and live from Belgrade. Of course, the presence of live television was not the only factor and perhaps not the major factor, but certainly the continuing public discourse to be seen by all the players across that country and across Europe served as a kind of defusing catalyst. One must think the continued exchange provided hard information, changes of tone and other diplomatic and military nuances.

During the Gulf War run-up, after the 2 August invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, we fielded many requests from heads of state to provide air time so their leader could, in effect, in their inevitable phrase, address the world with always a major speech. Well yes, it sounds like the power and the glory. More often, say in the case of Saddam Hussein, the audience may well have been the Arab world or his own military, and occasionally we were told it was President Bush. Not that we are being snippy in any case. It's just that the address was frequently, to be charitable, self-serving. President Bush, according to his staff, also made not infrequent use of CNN in a similar manner. I am sure the surroundings of some of the presidential pronouncements must have mystified less sophisticated viewers in the Middle East, coming as they did from the golf course at Kennebunkport. One could imagine the circle of plotters in some bunker in Baghdad watching Mr. Bush in a golf shirt in the clubhouse and wondering what had become of the White House.

As an aside, the regular viewers new to US reporting but accustomed to their own government-controlled journalism would call CNN in Atlanta after watching a Wolf Blitzer report from the Pentagon, or Charles Bierbauer from the White House, to complain. They thought our reporters were government spokesmen stating policy rather than providing some interpretive reporting. Blitzer became Mr. Pentagon to them. As a matter of fact, the White House would call us saying "what have you said now because the head of such and such state has just called and doesn't understand why we have changed our position."

The impact on viewers of an international television news signal began to dawn on us at CNN in the early 1980s. The attempted assassinations of the Pope and President Reagan are obvious enough. However, there are some lesser experiences that are more instructive to me and perhaps more interesting to you, if I may go briefly back in time.

In 1981, you may remember that Solidarity had come out very strong in Poland at a time when the Warsaw Pact troops were on manoeuvre and they had in effect surrounded the country. All of a sudden, one day, all contact with Warsaw was cut off, wire services were shut down, television was cut off. I remember we had to smuggle out videotapes on the express to Vienna. That's the time when you saw, if you remember in the still pictures perhaps, the anchors wearing military tunics. Well, we found out that it was possible to pick up an off-the-air signal right on the outskirts of the border. We took that signal from a little set with rabbit ears and we landlined it to Copenhagen. We had to re-route it then to Rome, Rome satellite to London, London satellite to Maine, Maine downlink landline through Washington, where I happened to be the bureau chief, and I had a Polish translator sit in there on set, landline to Atlanta, at Atlanta the signal would go back out to our subscribers around the world.

Well of course none of us thought it had a prayer of working, except the guys who were setting it up in Atlanta, and it worked. And so instantly, the viewers of Warsaw and the viewers who were watching CNN could hear what their fate was to be as read to them by the anchors in military uniform. It was very dramatic and the first use I know of for a communication of a breaking event like that.

Another experience we had was in December of 1985, you will recall that President Marcos' government was coming unravelled. He controlled Channel 4 in Manila, and on a regular basis would ask the CNN people in Manila down from Tokyo to cover the story if we would be interested in carrying his speech, which was pure propaganda. But the answer was yes within the context of the story. He was interested because he knew that his target audience, a few congressmen and senators on Capital Hill, could help save his government with a much needed appropriation or they could kill it. So we would carry the speech from Channel 4 in Manila, broadcast back to our subscribers in the States and with a forewarning

would have on standby the appropriate congressmen, senators and representatives of the administration to react. When we were doing a follow-up story we would find them quoting each other based on what they had seen on CNN, which was kind of a dog chasing its tail and a little scary, but it made an impression on us, deja was very vu!

The Gulf War, though, became the story to confirm how wired the universe is. Our coverage began on 2 August, the day of the invasion, and quickly dominated the twenty-four hour cycle. It soon became the exclusive story we reported. However, I am proud to let you know after listening to Milton [Viorst's] interesting remarks at noon, that we began doing the package reports, enterprise pieces on it, as early as April and had begun rather intensive coverage the first of July and stepped up our reporting to almost every hour as he moved troops in the middle of July toward the border.

CNN's relations with the all-important outlet Iraq TV in Baghdad went back to the beginning of the Iraq-Iran war, wherein we regularly asked for and used their coverage of the war from their side, as we did with Iran TV from Teheran's perspective. As you will recall, access to both sides was at best difficult for Western journalists. We frequently would tape their news programming as seen in Amman or Jerusalem or off the Arab satellite Arabsat.

Then about three years ago, CNN developed a programme we called *World Report*. Iraq TV became one of the regular contributors to the programme. It was then a weekly, and now it is a daily amalgam of news from 164 member countries. CNN's international editors became known to their counterparts in Iraq TV, and we had the advantage of being seen in Baghdad on a very limited basis. We think there were three downlink dishes in the capital city, one at the palace where Saddam stayed, one for the foreign minister and one for the information minister. The only other broadcast signals that I know of coming in from the West were BBC World Service Radio and the Voice of America. The upshot was that when the invasion occurred, we were dealing with long-time acquaintances. Iraq TV was not shy about touting its offerings after August the 2nd and most notably the speeches of Saddam Hussein, most often as read by that Omar Sharif look-alike if you remember. And given the penalty for failure in Iraq, one is not surprised how ardently these offerings were presented.

Some of you may recall that CNN drew some criticism early on for our showing of Saddam and the British hostages -- given that it was our first look at the man since the invasion and a look at the British prisoners, and given the global audience -- the decision to play that material in full from Iraq TV was not a difficult one. It took about fifteen seconds of discussion. Until Iraq TV was turned into rubble at the outset of the air war in mid-January, we received almost daily phone calls and dozens of cables from them making offerings, some of which were used, much of which we didn't use. As an aside, the Iraqis caught on quickly to some Western television techniques such as the crawl translation across the bottom or lower third of the screen, and the change to a more hospitable location as a backdrop when Saddam met with other hostages. It's my view that the speeches, statements and appearances of Saddam throughout the war were not directed at the leaders of the West as a primary audience. Rather he was going after his potentially strong majority, the Arab man and woman on the street, the Islamic equivalent of the blue-collar worker. Otherwise, the content and convoluted structure of his speeches made no sense.

Ultimately, his strategy failed and failed badly. There was not a revolution or uprising in the more sympathetic countries in the East, although we did not know it at the time, since it then seemed a near and close thing. The other Hussein, King Hussein of Jordan, appeared as a sad and uncertain figure. On several occasions, he or his emissaries called CNN in Atlanta and asked for coverage of a speech. I recall one weekend we agreed to carrying a speech from the King's office in Amman that was directed to President Bush, which we thought was a way to save postage. The CNN people with the President in Kennebunkport, as I recall, alerted his staff that such a message was en route and according to them Mr. Bush watched. It was about a half-hour, and his only reaction was it contained nothing new.

In one morning, during the early days of the war, one particular morning, we had on live President Mubarak, King Fahd, King Hussein and President Bush. Prime Ministers Mulroney and Thatcher were on tape for technical reasons -- nothing personal there regarding the Commonwealth. At CNN, I believe we have added some new turns on an old format that began perhaps back when Edward R. Murrow stood on the tops of buildings in London and reported the Blitz. In the late 1950s and 1960s, Huntley, Brinkley

and Walter Cronkite gave life to political journalism as their cameras roamed the national political conventions in the US, live and unedited. Cronkite managed a similar long-form-live reporting trick during the early days of the space shots from Cape Canaveral. More recently, in the mid-80s, Peter Jennings added lustre to his reputation with his deft handling of some Mid-East terror stories, notably the hijacking of a TWA airplane between Algiers and Beirut in 1985. ABC, as with the other entertainment networks, do have time limitations. CNN does not, and in this open-ended form we are I think at our best and most effective and serve our most important function.

If we were to take a strong story line, compress it into a formal documentary, preempt the news hours, and run it for say two hours on any night, chances are quite high that very few people would watch. That is the way of the world, rightly or wrongly. But if you take the same information, the news and opinion and build it around a live-from-the-scene reporter or anchor, and inject proper but frequent live shots from other aspects of the story, I believe you cannot only attract a sizeable audience but also perform some important and effective services for the viewers. We have learned over the eleven years CNN has been on the air that by keeping the experts at the very edge of a news story, presenting capable and knowledgeable reporters on camera, the viewers' interest will grow. The audience will sit still for long and sometimes boring background pieces. It will listen to a myriad of specialists; the scholar's debate; the reporter's report; the pundits punditing.

And all of this without sensationalizing that which is probably already a very sensational story, presenting really first-rate journalism using as the spine, live-from-the-scene. David Brinkley once said when you walk in front of a studio camera, you get out of the news business and into show business. Generally, he is right. But in the long-form-live, and live-on-tape reporting we are learning to do, one can really have both without grave damage to the most important feature, the news and its credibility. Certainly mistakes will be made. But corrections can be quickly added. And the emphasis is on the reporter and the event and not on the anchor reading an electronic gee-wizery of slickly packaged products.

Not many networks can do this. As a part of this responsibility, I have heard criticism that we at CNN and the global television news are putting too much pressure on politicians -- statesmen as they like to call themselves -- whenever the colloquy is international and not just local politics. When its war, they claim statesmanship. When it's our local highways being resurfaced, it's politics.

Well, perhaps we will serve to create a higher class of politicians. Certainly, we have seen over the decades that the political class has a remarkable ability to adjust quickly. And if no comment is proper for our satellite signal, then an intelligent policy-maker will tell us "no comment." If this limited stress is unacceptable, then perhaps we need some new leaders.

All the above is applicable to institutional, private sector, military and religious leaders, rock stars excepted. In his book *Mass Media and American Foreign Policy*, Patrick O'Heffernan said television impacts foreign policy in three ways. TV increases the number of players in international events, TV accelerates the pace of policy, and TV sets the policy agendas. The author notes that the players may not be to the liking of the diplomatic establishment since we seek participants who may be terrorists, sometimes a lunatic fringe, some who are not of the accepted and somewhat elitist diplomatic milieu.

In an interview, US political analyst Robert Beckel says he believed President Reagan found himself forced to keep sending Secretary of State George Schultz back to the Middle East because of the provocative effects of the televised clash between the Israeli army, the police and *Intifadah*. Viewers around the world fully expect complete coverage of the next war, not realizing that they hardly had complete coverage of the one we are still fighting. For instance, you have yet to see videotape or still picture of the war on the ground. What you did see was carefully controlled, except for the CNN open microphone in Baghdad, the flyaway in the Iraqi capital plus the live or near-live reports of the Scud-Patriot missile intercepts. We nearly all drowned in the Pentagon pools.

The air war was seen through the lens of the fighter bomber's government released successes. They did not show us any misses, which gave the impression of a Hollywood western -- I'm sorry, Toronto western -- where the good guy never misses.

The lesson is the new military age in the States would have stopped Ernie Pyle cold. Yet the media has not given away the game plan. Many of us knew weeks ahead of time about plans for the Seventh Corps to sweep deep into Iraq. I learned only today from General Sidle's talk of the printing by one publication of that game plan a week prior to the invasion on the ground, and I accept his word at that. I suspect, though, that there is no way Iraq could have learned of it at that time, because they were isolated from the rest of the world. Still and all, that's no excuse for that printing.

In surveys taken after the war, the public favoured three to one a press corps and not cheerleaders. The US public said it wanted the stories told straight. The evidence you have heard is anecdotal, the experiences and observations are real. We don't know where it all will lead. One of the experiences revolutionaries had was being hung in a town square. And that may happen. There are some things that do appear to be known and certain. We will have more news and not less in the decade ahead. It will come to us in different forms. Shapes already on some of your television sets from legal news in the form of say courtroom trials from the court TV channel, just as one example, to closed circuit health and medicine reports in your doctor's office, courtesy of Whittle Communications. You may very well see an explosion of local news, city council and traffic court as was pioneered by Channel 12 Long Island, New York. Almost certainly, CNN will find global competitors and regional competitors formed by international consortiums such as the BBC and NHK. The technology is not going to be disinvented. It is not going to go away.

The question then is will we be smart enough to use the technology wisely. Will we be astute and honest as programmers and as editors of this journalism. It will be expensive and it will be difficult, but given the track record of the free world's journalist, I believe the answer is yes. We are cranky and we are impertinent and not infrequently wrong in this elusive search for truth. But taken as a whole, the answer is yes.

The burden for reporting accurately and well will continue to grow as will the expectations of the viewers. Viewers who serve in governments, and men and women who simply want to know. This week in *Insight Magazine*, Arnold Beichman, of the Hoover

Institute, said the world had a ringside seat to revolution. What he called the CNN-ization of the world. Our live camera from the roof of the building in which our bureau was housed looked down on the square on one side of the Russian Parliament building in Moscow. We saw the barricades go up live. The tanks rolled by. Boris Yeltsin got up on one of the tanks. We heard from our correspondent inside the building as its occupiers prepared for the worst. In one sixteen-hour period, the first night in the day of the coup, the viewers of the world learned of the takeover, saw the protesters and they watched a press conference of the coup leaders -- the eight grey men. We heard the women from Alma-Ata saying that people of Kazakhstan will hang with the people of Moscow in opposing the takeover. We saw the 300,000 demonstrators in Leningrad; they were seen worldwide. We watched it all collapse.

The President at Kennebunkport watched as did leaders across the West. Certainly, there were many factors in the failure. One has to believe that one of them was the open, complete and unhysterical reporting of the journalists on the scene. So my answer to the question: are we ready to do this and other similar tasks? -- is yes.

C BEHIND THE IMAGE -- Florian Sauvageau

The film entitled "Behind the Image" was made by us in 1978, a long time ago now. In it, we were trying to decode the process used to manufacture information. We were trying to explain what was happening behind the screen itself, behind the image.

What we were saying in the film, and what I think has been confirmed by events in recent years and television criticism, is that television has to be taken for what it is. I should first make one point clear: namely, that despite what I'm going to say, I like television. I have done a lot of television in my life and I hope to do a lot more, so I am not begging for a job. I like television but I don't think it is always put to good use. Mr. Turner said that technology can make a great contribution "if we are smart enough to use it." I do not think we are always "smart enough" or that we always use it correctly.

In the 1978 film, we were trying to explain that television is a medium of emotion, action and personality. If you are looking for explanations or ideas, don't try to find them in television. This does not mean that television is not important, or that television would not be a useful tool in a period of conflict, for example, because emotion is important. Feeling and emotions are an integral part of conflicts, just as much as thinking is. But television stresses emotion and feeling because it stresses image and intensity. As Mr. Cohen explained, television stresses action and emotion far more than explanation or thinking.

So we tried at the time to show the limitations of television. It was not an anti-television film, just as what we are saying this morning is not anti-television. It is very important that we understand the process used by television to manufacture information, given the position of supremacy television enjoys in the dissemination of information. For two-thirds of the people who watch television in the industrialized world, that medium is their primary source of information.

In his introductory remarks at the beginning of the conference yesterday, Mr. Wood referred to those images we all recall: young girls who had been bombed with napalm in Vietnam. In our film, we also used a very moving sequence of a cameraman filming his

own death in Chile in the early 1970s. In the sequence, you see a soldier shooting him, and after three or four shots he falls to the ground.

We also included in the film some striking footage of an execution during the war in Biafra, an execution which was clearly intended for television. Many of you will be familiar with this incident, since the Nigerian captain who presided over the execution of a Biafran refugee for the cameras of the BBC was himself subsequently executed by the firing-squad, perhaps also for the benefit of television. In the film, we also had an interview with one of the great Canadian television reporters, David Halton, who explained that his news desk and information chiefs in Toronto preferred action, such as shooting, and that his role was not to explain, with the help of maps, what was happening and what were the major issues involved in the conflicts he was covering.

In the film, there is a moving testimony from two war cameramen. One of them, Jean Reitberger, a sensitive man working for Radio-Canada in Paris, almost admitted that it was because of his presence and the presence of his cameras, that people started shooting. Therefore, people were killed because of him and television. Although this still occurs, the fact is, however, that such examples are now a little outdated and I thought it would be preferable to look critically with you at the process of television news. In doing so, we shall consider more recent examples from two works, which are among the many that have been published in France on this subject over the last six months.

I also think it would be useful during this discussion to consider the current questioning of television which is taking place in France. To use the expression of the sociologist, Dominique Wolton, the Gulf War gave rise to a real crisis of legitimacy regarding the press and television in particular. In fact, questions have been asked about television in Europe since December 1989 and the announcement of 60,000 people killed in Romania. It transpired subsequently there were hardly a thousand, which caused Ignacio Ramonet, Editor-in-Chief of *Le Monde Diplomatique* to talk of what he referred to as "necrophiliac television."

At the heart of this questioning is live television and CNN. Philippe Meyer, who is the television critic for the magazine *Le Point*, has referred to television as the Mecca of deception. As you can see, we are far from the triumphant tones of yesterday evening.

I would like to give a few examples from the current debate in France. Dominique Wolton, in his book *War Game* talks of exaggeration, rumours, non-verified information, repetition of the same images and information on the Gulf War, as was the case for example with the images of allied pilots taken prisoner, which you all saw. As Wolton points out, showing them once is information, but showing them ten times becomes sensationalism. In the Canadian context, the conflicts are national not international, but we can ask the same questions: for example a report on *The Journal*, showing a Quebec flag being trampled is journalism when aired once, whereas showing the same scene eight, ten or twelve times smacks of sensationalism.

Dominique Wolton concludes that "the purpose of the press is not to put the public directly in touch with the particular scene but to present the information to the public, which is the most important part in terms of understanding. And the purpose of the press is to provide for such understanding."

In another work as interesting as Wolton's, the radio and television critic of *Le Monde*, Alain Woodrow, wrote on the subject of live television: "We must call a halt to the tyranny of technology so as to re-establish a distance between the journalist and the current events he is dealing with." As Mr. Turner pointed out yesterday evening, technology and unedited information have destroyed the system of checking, sorting and ranking information by importance, all of which are at the very basis of journalism. I must conclude, therefore, that live television may be communication; it may be part of the grab-bag and cover-all approach to communication which has developed so quickly over the past ten years, but in my view it is not always journalism and sometimes it can be something far removed from journalism.

It is high time that we learned to distinguish journalism from other professional communication skills, such as promotional activities, public relations or entertainment.

Entertaining is not necessarily the same thing as informing, and entertainment is not necessarily synonymous with journalism.

As I pointed out, what applies to international crises is also true of national crises. Last winter, my students in the Master's programme analyzed the live coverage of the Oka crisis over three days, and they reached conclusions very similar to those of Dominique Wolton. This live coverage included rumours, repetition, and a mass of unsorted images, all of which lead to confusion rather than understanding.

It may be time we distinguished between the right to information -- a puffy cliché -- the right to know, the right to know immediately and the right to understand. Although the right to know immediately is fundamental to the speed of North American journalism, and Western journalism in general, it does not necessarily mean the right to understand.

Since 1978 -- and our film which is still of relevance despite the examples given here -- there have been various factors which have exacerbated trends which already existed. First, as I mentioned, technology has changed. I also mentioned development in communications and the confusion of media genres. However, those changes have taken place within the context of what I have described by a neologism in both English and French, and therefore one that is truly Canadian: commodification. "The commodification of news and of the media." "Making more than ever a commodity out of news." That has also been the trend of the past seven or eight years. The delicate balance which has always existed in the media between opposing ethical values: the newspaper owners' market ethic of profitability, the public service ethic, and the ethic of the journalist, which has always been considered in our business like a church-state relationship. There has always been a division between the business and the writing itself. I believe that this balance, which has always been delicate and must be rebuilt every day, has been broken in recent years in the atmosphere of fierce and unbridled competition we have known. Conflicts, crises and dramatisation, which have always been the essence of the news, have taken on far greater importance in the context of such extremely fierce competition. As Jerry Mander pointed out in his book *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*, and I should say that I am not in the least in favour of eliminating television: "More than ever in terms of news, war is better than peace, violence is better than non-violence."

I was reminded of Mander's observations by the book which seems to me to be the classic work on the use of violence by the media. The work in question, *Violence as Communication*, was written by two specialists from the Netherlands, Schmid and de Graaf, and published in 1982. In my view, all the questions we have been asking since the beginning of this conference are clearly asked in this work. The book discusses terrorism and the media, and the thesis of the authors is that terrorism can be understood only in the context of communications. "This type of terrorism, insurgent terrorism, has to be explained in relation to the prevailing information order in the news values that are paramount within this order."

I think that the debate should focus on an ethical consideration of information values. I am not talking here about a code of ethics. I am not talking about codes or standards which often lead to self-censorship, but to ethical thinking. Ethics means thinking about values, being patient with what is good, and distinguishing good from bad. For the moment, I would just like to mention two or three things from this book *Violence as Communication*, which gives us some indication of the complexity of the question which this conference requires us to address. These questions were asked yesterday: some of them dealt with censorship and there was one asked this morning about the impact of media coverage on conflicts. Is there an escalation here, is there a cause-and-effect relationship?

Who is affected? Are the effects positive or negative? Is there an effect on the government? The effects of presenting violence are not solely negative, and thus I would not wish to be Manichean in my presentation; rather I would try to qualify what can be said about such effects. Yesterday, Mr. Turner spoke of the influence of demonstrations in the USSR on President Bush. Such an influence may perhaps be positive.

In this summer's issue of the *Columbia Journalism Review*, Daniel Schorr explained that television played an enormous part in changing President Bush's attitude to the Kurds. The author explained that the initial criticism came from the print media, but they did not cause Bush to change his position. He quoted a comment from one of the President's aides concerning a critical article written by William Safire in *The New York*

Times: "A hundred selective comments will not change the public's mind." However, as a result of television and television pictures showing the distress of the Kurds, the attitude of the President changed gradually but magnificently, according to Daniel Schorr. We see, therefore, that the impact of television is not always negative.

We should also consider the impact on the public. The public is selective too. The public retains what it wants to retain from what is seen on television, on the basis of its prejudices, its viewpoint, its way of looking at television. The impact on other media such as the printed press is enormous. The impact of television on the print medium is not always positive. I think that the print medium tends now, far more than in the past, to see things in terms of conflicts because of television, because the ground rules are generally laid down by television and debates are seen from the perspective of television.

In the case of terrorism, journalists must take an ethical standpoint in considering the effect on hostages and also the effect on other potential terrorists through the process of imitation. On these points, the book shows us that the subjectivity of responses varies according to the person asked. If you were to ask a police chief whether live television coverage influences and encourages acts of terrorism, 93 percent would answer yes. Live coverage encourages terrorism. If you asked television news managers the same question, 35 percent would answer yes.

We can appreciate the extent to which the subjectivity of one's answers will vary according to the viewpoint of the person answering. We observed the same thing yesterday in the discussion on censorship, between the military and journalists. On the one hand, there was freedom of the press defended by journalists, while on the other there was censorship, not censorship in itself, but censorship on behalf of national security, which is also an important value in a democratic society. In this sense, there is a debate on values, between national security and freedom of the press. I think we have to strike a balance between these values and also between speech in general and speech as used by journalists. And I think it is important to note that it is rhetorical here, since both the military and the press know very well that in the reality of daily life they are condemned to get on with each other.

Of course in symposia, there is speech and expression, unlimited freedom of the press and unlimited national security. But in real life, what is said is different from what it is said in symposia. You have to find a compromise. The relationship between a journalist and source is an extremely complex one. It is one of almost continuous negotiation in the quest to find a compromise. This compromise has to be found in the real world, which makes it quite different from what the parties concerned might say. And, in fact, manipulation is not always unilateral. Both sides use each other.

In conclusion, I would simply like to say that the ethical debate must be ongoing both in editorial offices and also between participants in the information process, beginning with the sources and including the protagonists involved, the media and also the public. We must accept that the answers to the various questions asked in a public interest symposium, such as cause-and-effect relationships and freedom of the press as opposed to censorship, will vary depending on the individual, the medium and the country concerned. In my view, that is what is meant by democracy.

The following comment by an editorialist of a London newspaper *The Sun* might shock some people. He wrote in the *UK Gazette*: "Truth is sacred, but a newspaper which reveals only part of the truth is a million times preferable to one which reveals all the truth and harms its country." This comment would no doubt meet with the approval of General Sidle, but would displease a large number of journalists and particularly American journalists, but it is right that both sides in the debate should have different viewpoints. A number of people were upset by the interviews with Saddam Hussein. But as Michèle Cotta of the French television channel TF1 noted: "If Hitler had been interviewed, there might not have been a war and millions of people killed in 1940."

There must be an ongoing attempt to balance the values involved, since such values are constantly changing as the world changes. Yesterday, General Sidle asked why so many journalists now wished to cover the Gulf War. The answer is simply that since the Second World War, journalists and the media have changed, society has changed, as has the general also, although he probably would not admit to it. There is no definitive answer to any of these questions, and although that's a pity for those people who like certainty, it's really very good that that's the way things are.

D ESCALATION IN A SATELLITE AGE -- Mark Starowicz

We are not going to get the genie back in the bottle. Live television is with us, for better or for worse. I sat through an interesting discussion at the Banff television festival but there was a hapless hour of debate, which rotated around the idea that perhaps we should delay a live signal by two hours before allowing it on the air. And that was perhaps the way to tame the beast. That shows a profound misunderstanding of the existence of about a hundred networks around the world, each one of them slaughtering each other to get onto a satellite circuit.

The issue is not to hold back the news, but how to assure its accuracy. A morality accompanies *live* just as a morality accompanies *montage* -- the construction of previously recorded pictures. An example of unethical *live* would, in my mind, be the period of the TWA hijacking when there was a cluster of hostages kept for the longest time in Beirut, then a cluster were brought out to Larnaca. They were allowed access to cameras after a few days and so one had scenes of tired and hopelessly frightened people in Beirut being asked, "What do you think the Secretary of State ought to do?", "What have you got to say to Cyrus Vance?" and "What do you think the President should be doing?" That is unethical escalation and stampeding of the political process. You don't ask a mother whose kid has just been run over by a car what her analysis of the judicial system should be. The morning shows, almost all of the American morning shows, originated live from Larnaca a couple of days later to meet more returning hostages. They brought with them relatives of the hostages. On the surface, it might appear to be a charitable act, but it was a way to guarantee access to one of the people going down the ramp. "I've got Uncle Harry here, he wants to talk to you," and you'd have these reunions.

All of that, I think, is an unethical and immoral theatricalization of the news, exploitation of life for purely sensational purposes, and preying upon people's emotions. Whom you go to live, and when and why become critical ethical decisions which could occupy us for a week, and will probably occupy the profession for the better part of a decade.

We can't throw the baby out with the bath water, although I didn't see the Yeltsin-Gorbachev forum because I was in Borneo of all places, the one place CNN

doesn't get to. One clearly sees the beneficial effect of live television and multiple point hook-up and linkage as a historical event in itself.

Parenthetically, I am also irritated by the idea that the responsibility of *live*, of this ethical crisis, is born suddenly and whole, and laid on the doorstep of television. Let's read a little bit of our history. Let's remember the Spanish-American war as a function of a circulation war in New York City between Pulitzer and Hearst, let's remember the sinking of the Maine, let's remember the march up San Juan Hill which was staged three times, and let's remember the McCarthy period, let's remember the headlines of the war. My favourite one was in *The Toronto Sun* which was "Hussein Bombs Holy Land." I can't imagine them running a headline saying "Allies Bomb Cradle of Civilization." Can you? Let's remember also the Falklands War -- "Gotcha" -- when they sank the *Belgrano*. "Seventeen Hundred Argies Drown," and "Argie" was an accepted term. So morality, instantaneity, jingoism, are not sins exclusive to television. There is bad television, there is bad print, there always has been bad print as well as good print.

There are, however, lessons of the Gulf War which I would like to go over, and lessons about the Gulf War in the satellite age. And I am fond of saying these days, the future seems farther away than it did a year ago, doesn't it? There was a hubris that accompanied the McLuhanite, "we are going to link the whole planet, everything will be instantaneously accessible," and that hubris crashed. And the Gulf War has converted the hubris of the satellite age into a debate over the hijacking of the press. Sydney Schanberg, *The New York Times* correspondent on whom the movie the *Killing Fields* was based, said recently in Washington that "the press behaved like a part of the establishment" and is now "feeling embarrassed and humiliated and mortified over its performance." Stanley Cloud, *Time* magazine's Washington Bureau Chief recommended three months ago that editors simply tell the Pentagon "You go and invade some Third World country and we won't play, we will get there on our own somehow and we will cover it." The Gulf War has taught us shatteringly and dramatically, how very easy it is to block a technology regardless of its extraordinary potential.

In fact, it is a lesson we should have learned twice before. In the three principle conflicts of the last decade the Falklands, the Iran-Iraq war, and the Gulf War, the

technology was there to bring unprecedented coverage. In all three, the potential of the technology was either betrayed, or significantly undermined by the belligerents which denied TV access to the story. In the Falklands War we should remind ourselves that although British ships carried satellite dishes, the reports were censored, but most importantly, delayed by about four days. The burning of the *Sir Galahad* took two weeks to get back to London.

Well folks, we did better in the Boer War with packet-boats; in many cases reports from South Africa reached Britain within nine days by packet-boat at the turn of the century than film of the Falklands. And in fact, after D-Day, Spitfires were carrying film back to London and it was in the theatres the next day, the next afternoon. So you had twenty-four hour coverage of combat troops in the European theatre.

On the Argentinian front, reporters were so tied down in their hotels in Buenos Aires that the first modern satellite war has been aptly named "The Room Service War." The Iran-Iraq war, which lasted eight years and had one million casualties, might as well have occurred on another planet. That got nicknamed the "convoy into hell" war because at best, the correspondent would be driven for sixteen hours into the middle of an artillery barrage, totally disoriented and then driven out a day later to Baghdad. On the Iranian side you were lucky to get a shot of the Fountain of Blood of the Martyrs, and then you were driven back to the airport.

Let me make a parenthetic remark about an event that happened after the Gulf War that got virtually no coverage -- a failure of the satellite age, but not one that can in any way be ascribed to the military. One hundred and forty thousand people died in Bangladesh last spring. Where were the helicopters flying in the great satellite dishes so that the world could share in the scale of this great human tragedy? No one was stopping them. Yet we did not see this great human tragedy as being worth the trouble to bring our technology to bear. We survived on a mere one minute of footage for three days. The death of 140,000 souls compels, I think, a more moral scale of witness than one minute. Not all the failures of the satellite age are caused by the military.

But let us return to the lessons of the Gulf. The ease with which the promises of satellites could be subverted by the control of the military has been commented on frequently, at Banff and other conferences and meetings around the world. But the Gulf War brought another scale of problem. I believe that this was raised yesterday. There were 1,600 correspondents and crews accredited to the coalition command in Saudi Arabia alone. That is 400 more than Eisenhower had to worry about during the entire liberation of Western Europe. Eighty percent of the correspondents had to watch General Schwarzkopf's briefings in overflow rooms, or on closed circuit in their hotel rooms. Brian Stewart, *The Journal*'s correspondent in Saudi Arabia, and one of the first into the liberated Kuwait, suggested that we call the Gulf conflict, the "School Bus War." Everyone was moved around in little rickety yellow school buses, the kind we find everywhere around the world. Convoys of yellow buses carrying hasty assortments of Finns, Canadians, Brazilians and Kansas City affiliates to Khafji or to a shoe factory.

The "gee whiz" our-man-in-the-Gulf syndrome which hit American news, actually began with the Reykjavik Summit. Governments have realized in this decade that the local press is likely to be less critical than the national. David Gergan is credited with this White House strategy in the Reagan years, but it is clearly a broader strategy today. The local police reporter or late night anchor is unlikely to be practised in military affairs, and at any rate has been brought over to do a human interest feature on the home town reserve unit which invariably yields a boosterist, "our boys are ready to kick ass" report. Governments have also learned that it is better to have Secretary Baker interviewed for three minutes by fifteen grateful morning shows, and six o'clock newscasts in a row, than to subject him to a half hour interrogation by the Middle East correspondents of the *Times*, or on *Night Line*. The congestion of the press at the source of the story is playing into the censors' hands. We, in the press, have to develop acceptable alliances and pools among ourselves or they will do it for us. In fact, they did. We have to set up independent ad hoc syndication systems and non-political pool feeds. Governments' press strategies and the sheer numbers of the press, will continue reducing many world events to the level of mass photo opportunities. And I think a large part of the Gulf War can be described as a mass photo opportunity.

This leads to a pernicious form of escalation by anchor man. The roots of this lie in our home markets, however, as we've allowed the competition to theatricalize our war. Our man at the Berlin Wall has replaced our man at the Academy Awards. The affirmation of presence has become the standard of veracity. It is a competition for the back drop, the Berlin Wall or the blue domes of the Dhahran Hotel. Everybody thought it was part of a mosque, but you know the blue domes are over the pool. This is a derivative of sending the weather man to the roof of the station to deliver the news that it is snowing, applied to a global scale. I call it cargo-cult journalism.

If you remember *Mondo Cane* there was a poignant portrait of a near stone-age tribe in the Pacific whose territory abutted a US Airforce base. Seeing that huge transport planes regularly unloaded food and riches for the troops, they concluded that the control tower was what was attracting these huge silver birds with food. And the film portrays the pathetic bamboo control tower built by the villagers to attract the great silver birds to their side of the fence. In the same way our man in Amman, with a shirt with epaulettes has become the cargo-cult journalism of the satellite age. If I am standing here live, and there is a minaret behind me, then I am a journalist and you should believe me.

I think the Gulf War, to sound an optimistic note, has seen the cresting of this ersatz *live*, this three-minute Baker interview, this assumption that immediacy is veracity. Something which has delivered us to the military PR man and the government minder. The *Saturday Night Live* character with the satellite dish on his head is the beginning of society rejecting, what in retrospect will be seen as a bizarre and grotesque journalistic by-product of the competition induced by the people meter and the zapper.

Why do I think it is dying? Well first of all, everybody is going to go broke trying to conduct it. More importantly the editorial currency itself is being devalued, devalued by the sheer inflation of overprinting the bank notes -- too many pretend CNNs, every affiliate is a CNN. Everybody's out there doing the "here I am" number. Too many news directors who bought the idea that CNN, instead of being a very unique and honourable niche in television, was the only way to do television information in the zapper age. Whether it be an auto accident, a city hall, everything is live at the City Council meeting,

live at the Rotary Club, there is Shirley and Frank, Shirley and Frank what is going on? This is cargo-cult journalism adapted to a local situation.

This was a misreading of CNN itself, by the way, which has to be credited with considerable prepared programming, a world-wide bureau system which is impressive, and carries an awful lot of foreign-produced material. Instead, the jargon of McLuhan was used to justify the purity of the instant -- a convenient philosophy by which we could dismiss the need to have foreign bureaus, learned correspondents, proper archival systems, foreign teams which developed experienced and seasoned editors. Out went the documentary units, out went the special report units, out went the CBS Special Report units -- exchanged for swivel-chair journalism, worship of the moment and hotdogging in front of the domes of the Dhahran Hotel.

But competition requires differentiation. I believe that for sheer competitive reasons, after the fever of the Gulf, you are going to see the special report and documentary units rescued from the trash bin. You are going to begin to see the competition which advertises the breadth and depth of a correspondent. There will be a yearning, and I can sense that already in the backlash against the Gulf coverage, for the Cronkite model rather than the "here I am in Afghanistan" anchor. And people will remember that Murrow did indeed speak live from the roof of Broadcast House, but he spent two hours writing the script. Journalism professors might even begin mentioning William Shirer and Howard K. Smith. I think and I hope the shift will occur, not for nostalgic reasons, but because this is the correct anti-zapper strategy. Differentiation and quality, the wise news director will realize, are the correct commercial strategies in the area we face. You will begin to advertize your stable of correspondents, their depth, their knowledge, and that way begin to win the affinity of your audience.

I am not unhappy that the press is opening their veins publicly about the Gulf War, although I am unhappy about that bleeding through into Canada. One should never discourage doubts in an industry so resistant to self-examination. The military of both sides certainly made short shrift of the hubris of the livingroom war. I think by the time I left for the summer, half the footage shot in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait by pool crews, still hadn't cleared the Pentagon. The sheer mass of the stuff never reached the public.

But I am not prepared to be one of the pall bearers of the satellite age. I'd like to say a word about the real promise of the satellite and also one of the great victories of journalism in the Gulf War.

Who said the satellite's virtue lay in its instantaneity. In the early promise of technology, we spoke of defeating distance. We used words like link, instead of live. The great promise of the satellite's age was pluralism. The monopoly of opinion and comment would be destroyed. We would hear people from the University of Cairo, we would link with Islamabad and Amman. Never again would the only Arab viewpoint come from just the local university. We would also defeat the inner distance of our own communities and continents, we would enter people's homes and speak with single mothers in Gainsborough and link them with a mother in Chicago and Toronto to create interconnections that were hitherto unthinkable.

This is my point. The dream was to defeat distance. It was hijacked to defeat time. Brian Stewart makes a very important observation which has not really sunk into most of us. This is the first war in the history of humanity where a representative of the other belligerent appeared almost nightly in the homes of the world. Can you imagine interviews with Ho Chi Minh in American livingrooms at the height of the Vietnam war? Can you imagine Soviet and Chinese comment and debate on American screens in the wake of the Tet offensive?

On our network, on radio and on television, (and this is where I regret the bleed-over of the American criticism onto the Canadian side), my memory of the war were links to Cairo, to Mubarak's advisors, to political scientists and historians and to politicians in Amman and Jerusalem and Iran, to Rajhida Dergham, debates between figures and Moscow and Washington links between Ottawa, Berlin and London, debating the morality of a course of action at the moment. And that part of the journalistic war was a characteristic of Canadian radio and television coverage, perhaps because we couldn't quite play the instantaneity of the moment game, and we weren't able to access the American ground forces. But perhaps also because we had more of a stake in pluralism.

Of that part of the war I am extremely proud, and I think Canada was extremely well-served. I think it is of landmark importance that it has become socially and politically acceptable for our teenage children to watch a war debated between Arab, African and European leaders and analysts. This is unprecedented in the history of journalism and of war. Just think of the scale of change that represents from the Korean War and the Pacific War. The Gulf War represents the defeat of the "live at any cost" school of journalism, the defeat of the local live-eye fever born out of the frenzy of local eye witness newsrooms and applied to a global theatre. I'll happily be a pall bearer at that funeral. But in the faces and the debates I saw and the scenes on the screens from Baghdad, Amman, Jerusalem and Moscow, I think we saw the glimmer of a pluralism, a willingness to hear a different view, a premise that it is not treasonous to debate an action or a policy. And in that pluralism, in that defeat of distance rather than time, I think we saw in the Gulf War the first vindication of the early promise of the satellite age.

E REPORTING ON FOREIGN CRISES AND WARS -- Ann Medina

We heard Mr. Turner's talk to us and he described a situation during the Gulf War where the phone rang and someone said "This is Gadhafi. I'd like to get on the air please." They thought it was a joke, but it turned out to be Gadhafi. And indeed, he wanted to get on the air and CNN put him on the air. Later, King Hussein of Jordan called, he too wanted to be on the air. He wanted to address something to President Bush. So they had their little think tank, should we put them on, yes they did. What worries me is you get this image of the future of the Larry King talk show where we have King Hussein on line two, we have Gadhafi on line one, who are we going to punch up first. And it isn't absurd, that is what one thinks about as a real possibility: where journalism becomes a kind of talk show forum, with various leaders; and is this the type of forum, where the most fruitful, meaningful and hopefully peaceful kinds of negotiations can take place? I don't know.

But his talk was very smooth. And yes, it is a reality and yes, we cannot turn back the clock or the march of technology. He painted this picture -- and you know those newspaper things where you have to find out what is wrong with the picture. There is this little thing in the back and it is upside down, as a kid you would check them all -- he talked about the "spine of live coverage" and how it packages or how he presents the shows with real reporting, with the reporters and the events around this spine. And what *is* wrong with this picture? I started feeling maybe that spine is now all there is, that that is the whole body, that that is all that is being presented as information.

These are just a few little reactions, but what I really want to go back to is what I used to do, and that is: what is being a reporter all about? We talk about journalism, we talk about all this money spent, whether it is documentaries or satellites, but I am one of these old-fashioned people who think that there is something at the core. Part of what's at the core and at the foundation is the reporter. And the reporter in the sense that Turner himself described last night in talking about Murrow standing on the roof top doing what? -- being a witness. That is what a reporter is, to me, anyway. What I thought I did was to go around to various places and be a witness. To talk to someone, to see something, to listen to somebody. And say to you, the viewers, this is what I heard, this

is what this guy said, this is what is happening to this woman over here. I am your witness, I am your eyes, this is what I am trying to tell you, what I saw.

Now I know there were those this morning who said there is no such thing as objectivity, and I think that is bunk. I have always said that is bunk. Yes, there is no such thing as pure objectivity, but there is in our gut, we all have some recognition of more subjective or less subjective, more objective or less objective, and it does make a difference when a reporter goes out and tries to toss away all the baggage, all the biases, all the preconceptions. They don't succeed, but they try -- to tell you what they saw. It is a very simple thing, I always thought, what I was sent out to do and bring back and report. But the question is what happens when you have situations in crises, in wars, how does this witnessing work, how does this reporting work? If you take as a given that even in normal times any government, any opposition, any interest group is going to want to slant a little information a little bit. I mean we all do it. Sometimes maybe even push that little parameter of truth a bit.

If all of this takes place in peacetime, what about in wartime? In wartime, the stakes are high. In wartime, if somebody loses the game the consequences are greater. The pressures for deception, the pressures for changing a little bit about the truth of events, the temptations to do that, as you know, it's no surprise, are greater than at any other time. In war, there is also on either side a tendency toward self-deception, where one side wants to think that they are doing alright, that they are winning. There is this wishful thinking. In war, there is a change, a pace of events that takes place very fast. How does one witness, how does one find the truth with all of these deceptions and self-deceptions and rapid change? Do we rely upon officials, leaders, whether its with External Affairs in Canada or State Department in the United States. Do we rely upon experts? When we may be have difficulty witnessing things, do we step back and rely upon those whom we are told know something?

Well I must say again and again, when I would go out and cover stories, there was no question. Do I rely upon officialdom anywhere, and the answer was always no. I would learn, I would listen, I would ask questions, but time and time again, what set

the story straight, where I discovered the story, was only when I became a first hand witness. I'll give you a couple of examples.

We were in Uganda, there was this guy named Museveni who was trying to take over the country, and we stopped in first and talked to the Canadian embassy people who were in Kenya, asked them, well what is the situation? Is Obote going to win, is the government going to fall, this guy Museveni is he going to win, and they said, no question, as unfortunate as it may be, Museveni hasn't got a chance, the government will stand, the government will hold fast. We got there, we got into Uganda, we talked to the British embassy, the British officials, same story. We'd love to say that Museveni might make a difference but they're kids, the army is ragtag, they are fourteen, they have no proper arms. We read in the English newspapers in Kampala that this key city called Masaka where Museveni was conducting an onslaught, trying to take it over, that the government forces that were there had held the town.

So here we are, let's say we can't witness anything. I am a reporter but what do I report? Canadian, British, French actually, all the officials, State people, they all said one thing. The English newspaper said the same thing. We are in Kampala, we are not in Masaka. And everybody says there the government is holding...we had to go out and see for ourselves. And you can guess what happened. We finally got through all of these checkpoints saying stay away and we would talk to them and finally they would let us go another mile down the road and another. And we became finally what we were there for, to witness. And there Museveni's people, having complete control of Masaka. Yes, one fourteen-year old kid had a yellow boot and a red boot on the other foot. I mean they did look crazy, the Brits were right. But you have to witness. No matter how authoritative the source was, it could be wrong.

I give you another example, 1985; there has been a lot of discussion about the TWA hostage crisis; many of you probably recall this. It was a Saturday morning, and I was in Beirut. Larry Speaks, White House spokesman says, "the hostages are released." Not "negotiations are going on," not "things look hopeful," "the hostages have been released." Well, we were still not quite sure. Syrian radio, the equivalent of the Syrian government, what did they say? About fifteen minutes later, ladies and gentlemen,

"the hostages have been released." Well, if you've got the US saying it and you have Syria saying it, come on, it has to be true, right? Wrong, as we all know. The negotiations almost broke down, it was a very fragile night, I can tell you Beirut almost exploded -- did anyone see the hostages? Who witnessed what? Do we rely upon officialdom, do we rely upon the leaders who should know?

I don't know about you, but again and again, especially these days, it is not only that if I rely upon their information and their knowledge in terms of giving me what I am going to report, it is not only that I am not being a reporter vis-à-vis witness, but I think more and more, I would just be wrong.

We can go back to China. And we are not now talking about the demonstrations but how much did people really think that Tiananmen Square would happen with the ferocity that it did? What about the whole change in what is taking place with Eastern Europe. All through the G-7 talks did we get the feeling that a coup was imminent? That things could really go wrong? I feel that in terms of reliance on the supposedly sophisticated intelligence communities -- they may have satellites galore up there, but so often something is missing that might inform them that is on the ground. And I don't know what that is. And I am not saying reporters know any more than they do. But in terms of my role as a reporter, do I go, when I can't witness, to the officials, to the experts, to the armies, to the governments around me, to tell me what is going on? If I did, I think I would be wrong a lot of the time and I think I wouldn't be doing my job.

I remember I ran into Phillip Habib, years after he had left his official role in the US government. And there was a key time in Lebanon where the Israelis were withdrawing and the Druze and the Christians were going at it. And there was a crucial time when the US fired their big guns. And it turned out to be against the Druze, and they became a player on that one very significant day. And shortly thereafter, as we all know disaster struck when hundreds of marines were killed when a big bomb went off. Habib admitted to me that it had been a mistake. They hadn't realized what going after the Druze meant. They didn't have enough contacts with the Druze. And I will say they probably didn't have enough contacts with the Shi'ites. And I will say that with Israel, when they were in South Lebanon after they had withdrawn from Beirut, they didn't know

-- despite this great Israeli intelligence. And they will say this now. They didn't understand the depth of hatred and bitterness that the Southern Shi'ites felt against them. They thought it was the extremists. On the ground, we were kept out. The Israelis would not let us into South Lebanon. Either from the north through Beirut or the south across their border. Somehow we got in through the help of one little UN guy, terrific guy. And there were no news agencies, but again we had to be a witness of what was happening.

And there would be shopkeepers, not masked people who didn't want to tell you their name, who would say, my name is so and so and I wish I had a daughter who would give her life as a suicide bomber to kill the Israelis. This was not some militant extremist, it sent chills down me. But I began to understand, by being a witness, some of the ferocity of opposition that Israel was experiencing.

Witness. What did we see with the Gulf coverage. Were reporters being reporters? Were they being witnesses in any sense. They couldn't be. They tried, and we saw what happened to Bob Simon when they tried. But what worries me is that core of reporting, reporters being witnesses, is getting lost. You have reporters, they look like they are reporters, they've got their microphone, the backdrop is there, the presence. And they are asked questions, what is happening, by the anchors. But they don't know, they have been in a hotel room, what do they know? They have been in a news conference, what do they know? They were embarrassed and I don't know about you as a viewer, I too was embarrassed. When the public starts seeing reporters with their microphones and says, "they aren't being witnesses," they're not telling me something that they have known and they saw and they touched. They are standing there and they are telling me that the hostages have been released, on that Saturday. And they don't know it.

What happens is an important link between truth, and what is happening, and the viewer, gets snipped. And I don't mean that that's all there is. In addition to that little reporter-witness aspect, you need to build with analysis, you need to build with amplification, you need experts, you need different opinions. But that core, that link with reality to me is absolutely sacrosanct in terms of the trust. And when I heard the question this morning asked: "do we really possibly need to send correspondents into the field?" What that was

asking is do we really need that initial foundation of a link upon which we build whatever truths, whatever information that we can.

I may be crazy, I think there are core truths. If I as a reporter, and I am witnessing bodies, if I cannot call that a massacre in Sabra-Shatila, and not have someone say: "that is personalization." If I can't say and describe what I am seeing that sometimes, yes, is strong, and all we can do is get it in homogenized form or through various filters, I think we all lose. Now we may not be the best filter always, the reporters in the field, trying to be witnesses. We get misled, we get carried off with the whole temper of whether it is dangerous times or election times, or high times or low times. We're not perfect. But when you eliminate that factor, or when you make reporters what I call, human exclamation points, to say, hi, here's presence, we are really there, rather than giving information. When you lead the public and the viewer to distrust that that person truly was a witness, I think we all lose.

F **THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT**
12 and 13 September 1991
Ottawa, Canada

AGENDA

Thursday, 12 September
08:00 - 09:00 Registration

WHEN WAR IS BIG NEWS: THE GULF WAR AS A CASE-STUDY
Bernard Wood, Chair

09:00 - 12:15 **The Rules in the War Zone**
- Aileen McCabe, *Southam News*
- Geneviève Rossier, Radio-Canada

The Home Front
- Colin MacKenzie, *The Globe and Mail*
- Jim Travers, *Southam News*
- Rear Admiral Larry Murray,
Department of National Defence, Canada

12:30 - 14:00 Lunch, Banquet Room, Chateau Laurier
Pre War Media Coverage -- Did it Make Any Difference?
- Milton Viorst, *The New Yorker*

Thursday, 12 September

DEFINING THE PUBLIC INTEREST: WHOSE INTERESTS AND WHY
Hélène Pichette, Chair

14:00 - 17:00 **Winning the War -- Protecting the Participants:**
- General Winant Sidle
Retired US Chief of Army Information

The Public's Right to Know
- William Solomon, Department of Journalism
and Mass Media, Rutgers University

The Challenge of Balance in Wartime
- Rajhida Dergham, *Al-Hayat*

Censorship and a Controlled Press
- Ann Nelson, Director, Committee to Protect Journalists

19:00 - 22:00 Dinner, Banquet Room, Chateau Laurier
The Power and the Glory
- Ed Turner
Executive Vice-President News, CNN

Friday, 13 September 1991

THE MEDIA AND ESCALATION - CAUSE AND EFFECT?
Mark Heller, Chair

09:00 - 12:00 **The *Intifadah* and the Comparative Context**
- Akiba Cohen, Professor of Communications
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Behind the Image
- Florian Sauvageau
Professor of Communications, Laval University

Escalation in a Satellite Age
- Mark Starowicz
Executive Producer, The Journal, CBC

12:15 - 14:00 Lunch, Banquet Room, Chateau Laurier
Reporting on Foreign Crises and Wars
- Ann Medina

THE MEDIA IN NEGOTIATION - TO PLAY OR NOT TO PLAY?
Nancy Gordon, Chair

14:00 - 16:00 **The Journalist Hostage**
- Roger Auque, ex-correspondent in Beirut, Radio-Canada

The Iran Hostage Caper
- Jean Pelletier, *Journal de Montréal*

Does the Media Get in the Way?
- Robert Karl Manoff, Center for War,
Peace and News Media

Diplomacy on Fast Forward: The Television Factor
- Jeremy Kinsman
Department of External Affairs Canada

POWER AND RESPONSIBILITY
Bernard Wood, Chair

16:30 - 17:30 **A Summary of the Discussion**
- John Honderich, *The Toronto Star*

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